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MEXICO:

ITS GEOGRAPHY—ITS PEOPLE—

AND

ITS INSTITUTIONS:

WITH
A MAP,

THE RESULT OF ALEXANDER VALLART'S
TRAVELS IN MEXICO, YUCATAN, AND OTHERS.

BY
THOMAS F. FARNHAM

Author of "Travels into the Interior of Mexico," "Travels in the
Yucatan," &c. &c.

NEW YORK
H. LOEY & BROUWER,

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A MAP,

CONTAINING

THE RESULT OF THE LATEST EXPLORATIONS OF
FREMONT, WILKES, AND OTHERS.

BY

THOMAS J. FARNHAM,

Author of "Travels across the Great Western Prairies," "Travels in California," &c. &c.

NEW-YORK:

H. LONG & BROTHER,

32 ANN-STREET.

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P R E F A C E .

THIS book is intended to present a concise view of the Republic of Mexico, in its physical features and moral aspects. Its geography, its agriculture, its mines, its people, its military resources, its government, its church, and its public men, are treated in a manner thought to be the most concise and intelligible. In doing this the author has consulted all the standard authorities on the subject, and selecting therefrom what he has deemed true, has added the same to the knowledge which he himself acquired during his travels in that country. He therefore ventures to say, that no other single work contains so full and so accurate an account of Mexico as this.

Of the Map accompanying the work, it should be said that readers may be assured of its general correctness. In regard to those portions of it which relate to the Californias, the author avers it to be the only one in existence which presents anything like a full and accurate idea of the geography of those countries. The author's own explorations, together with those of the U. S. Exploring Expedition under Captains Wilkes and Fremont, are used in its construction.

On the whole, it is hoped that this little book will meet the desire of the public for information relative to the wide-spread and important regions of which it treats.

No parts of the earth are so pregnant with great events as these. Inhabited by a race incapable of self-government; whose vices are so numerous and deleterious as to prevent any considerable increase of their numbers; whose union with the Indian and Negro debase the morals and decrease, from generation to generation, the physical and mental powers—Mexico must eventually be peopled and governed by another race. As the Indian and other inferior orders of the human family have ever given place to the Caucasian branch; so must, as a general law, all mixtures of that branch with these, fade before the greater intelligence of its pure blood—so certainly as the stars do before the sun. How interesting then does the fate of Mexicans become; and their country—the theatre of coming acts and scenes of untold influence over man—how important for Americans to know it well. The following pages describe it.

THE AUTHOR.

MEXICO, TEXAS AND CALIFORNIA.

CHAPTER I.

PHYSICAL FEATURES.

Sources of Information.

PREVIOUS to the publications of Robertson, the Scottish historian, little more was known of the Spanish American colonies than the history of their discovery and conquest. For two hundred years, with the exception of Ulloas' travels and discourses, and the narratives of Bouger and Condanine, no satisfactory intelligence had been communicated to the world relating to any of the principal Spanish settlements. But at the commencement of the present century, with the change of system adopted by the Spanish government, the scene changed. Travellers were no longer refused admittance to her colonies. In consequence, much additional information has been given to the public, by the various publications of Molina, Alcedo, Estallo, Depons, Antillon, and, above all, by Humboldt, whose work yet remains our main authority on the geography of those regions. His remarks, however, embrace only that part of Mexico which lies to the south of the 24th deg. of N. latitude. The deficiency was in some measure supplied by General Pike, of the American army, who, in 1805-7, traversed the country from Santa Fe to Chihuahua, and thence east to Louisiana.

Of late years there has been no want of writers. Of these the most credible and intelligent are the following, to all of whom are we more or less indebted for the succeeding sketches.

- Waddy Thompson's Recollections. New-York, 1846.
Gilliam's Travels in Mexico. Philadelphia, 1845.
Life in Mexico. By Madame Calderon de la Banca. 2 vols. Boston, 1843.
General Green's Texan Expedition. New-York, 1845.
Brantz Mayer's Mexico; as it Was and Is. New-York, 1842.
Prescott's History of the Conquest of Mexico. 3 vols. New-York, 1844.
Kendall's Santa Fe Expedition. 2 vols. New-York, 1844.
Bernal Diaz' History of the Conquest of Mexico. Translated by Lockhart. 2 vols. Svo. London, 1844.
Mexico in 1827. By A. G. Ward. 2 vols. London, 1828.
Latrobe's Rambler in Mexico. 2 vols. London, 1836.
Bullock's Six Months in Mexico. 2 vols. London, 1825.
Cullen's History of Mexico. 3 vols. Philadelphia, 1817.
De Solis's History of the Conquest of Mexico. 2 vols. London. 1738.
Edwards' History of Texas. 1 vol. Cincinnati, 1836.
Alexander von Humboldt's Essay on New Spain. 4 vols 8vo. London, 1811.
Kennedy's Texas; its Geography, &c. New-York. 1844.

Newell's History of the Revolution in Texas. New-York, 1838.
 Poinsett's Notes on Mexico. Philadelphia, 1824,
 Farnham's Travels in California. Svo. New-York, 1844.
 Forbes' History of California. 1 vol. London.
 Life in California. 1 vol. New-York, 1846.
 Texas and the Texans. 2 vols. Philadelphia, 1841.
 Texan Emigrant. Cincinnati, 1838.
 Mrs. Holley's Travels in Texas. Baltimore, 1830.

Boundaries.

The Republic of Mexico, as it existed at the time it assumed its independence, extended from the 14th to the 42d parallel of north latitude. It is separated from Guatemala by a line drawn from the foot of Tehuantepec in the Pacific, to the bay of Honduras. Its boundary line with the United States was understood to commence at the mouth of the Sabine river, which is about two hundred miles west of the Mississippi. From this point it ascends that stream to its source in the belt of high land which separates the valley of the Red river from Texas; thence north-west to the Red river: it then ascends the course of that stream to the 100th deg. of W. longitude; and thence strikes off N. to the Arkansas, in the same meridian, up that river to its source; from thence to the source of the Platte river, in 42 deg. N. latitude, and thence almost due W. till it strikes the coast of the Pacific, in latitude 42 deg. N., which is about the line of demarkation between Massachusetts, and Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, and New-York.

Extent of Surface.

At its southern extremity, Mexico is but 130 miles in width. Between Aca-pulco and Vera Cruz it is 280 miles. In latitude 26 deg. between the mouth of the Rio del Norte and the eastern shore of the Gulf of California, it is 725 miles in width; at latitude 30 deg. it is 1200 miles in width, and in latitude 33 deg. it is 1400 miles from the eastern limit of Texas to the Pacific Ocean. From the irregularity of its form it is impossible to determine with precision the superficial contents of Mexico; but, according to the best authorities it may be considered as occupying about 1,200,000 square miles, or more than six times the area of France. In this estimate we do not include the area of Texas, which of itself contains about 500,000 square miles.

Natural Divisions.

This immense country is divided by nature into three regions, each of which is marked by distinct features. The first comprehends the countries lying to the east of the isthmus of Tehuantepec, which is crossed by the meridian of 95 deg. W. Greenwich; we shall call it the eastern region. The second extends from the meridian of 95 deg. in a curved line to the mouth of the Rio del Norte on the east, (26 deg. N. lat.) and to the most northern recess of the Gulf of California (32 deg. N. lat.) on the west; it is the central region, or Anahuac. The third, or northern region, comprehends the countries situated north of a line drawn from the mouth of the Rio del Norte to that of the Colorado.

The Eastern Region.

The eastern region comprehends the plains of Yucatan, the plain of Tobasco, and the isthmus of Tehuantepec. The north-eastern extremity of the isthmus of Yucatan, near Cape Catoche, is hardly more than 150 miles from Cape St. Antonio on the island of Cuba. Through the strait formed by these headlands,

a current, with considerable velocity, sets in to the north. The northern and western shores of the peninsula have no harbours, but only roadsteads, which during the northern gales are very unsafe, but along the eastern shores there are several harbours. The shores are sandy and flat. The level country extends to a considerable distance inland, whilst the centre of the peninsula is occupied by a range of low hills. The hilly district in the interior, as well as the flat country on the northern coast, has a sandy soil, and no spring water is found from Cape Catoche to the mouth of the Rio de St. Francisco, which empties itself in Campeachy Bay. Its vegetation is scanty; the trees are stunted, and the plants of a languid growth, except during the rainy season, (from May to September;) but as the climate, though exceedingly hot, is healthy, it is much better inhabited and cultivated than the eastern shores.

Plain of Tobasco.

The plain of Tobasco begins on the east at some distance east of Lake Terminos, and extends westward to Patrida Rock, a moderately elevated cape on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, (98 deg. W. long.) This plain is more than 250 miles long, and extending inland from 50 to 120 miles. Its surface is a dead level, and the soil alluvial. Being very fertile, it is covered with a thick forest of heavy growth, but is little cultivated on account of its being subject to inundations, and generally under water for several months during the rainy season. It seems that this part of Mexico suffers as much from the superabundance of water as other parts for the want of it. To this circumstance, and the great heat of the summer, is the unhealthiness of this tract to be attributed. The Plain of Tobasco is watered by a considerable river, the Rio de Tobasco, and its two branches, the Usumasinta and the Grijolva.

Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

The plain of Tobasco occupies the northern portion and about one half of the isthmus of Tehuantepec. It has a very hot, but rather dry climate, and the soil, though not distinguished by fertility, is capable of producing several tropical plants. It is supposed that an easy line of communication may be established across the isthmus of Tehuantepec between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific, as the two seas are only 130 miles distant, and the plains adjacent are watered by navigable rivers. This was a favourite idea with Santa Anna.

Anahuac.

The *central region* of Mexico, commonly called Anahuac, exhibits great variety in its natural features. The eastern coast, which is low and sandy, runs on in a continuous line without being broken by inlets or bays; and consequently it contains no harbours except those formed by the mouth of the river; and even these are only unsafe roadsteads, as the rivers of this coast, with the exception of the Rio Alvarado, have only water enough in the rainy season. North of 22 deg. several rivers of considerable size fall into the sea, but except at their mouths, the coast cannot be approached by vessels, as it is lined by long, low and narrow islands, which lie parallel to, and from two to six miles from it. The channels by which these islands are separated are too shallow to admit even boats. The country adjacent to the shores, and from three to ten miles inland, is very low, but is defended from the sea by sand hills rising from 50 to 200 feet high. The soil is sandy and quite destitute of vegetation. At the back of this low sandy tract the country rises gradually to the foot of an extremely steep ascent, which constitutes the eastern ridge of the extensive table-land farther west. The coun-

try which lies between the shores and the steep ascent varies in width. At Vera Cruz it is only 60 miles wide. Further north it widens till it becomes nearly 180 miles across. This tract is comprehended in what is called the "hot countries." The seasons are divided into the winter, or the season of the north winds, and the summer, or season of the breezes. The former lasts from October to April, during which time the north winds are prevalent, and frequently blow with the force of a hurricane, sometimes for days together: they are the terror of navigators on these shores. During these periods the coast is healthy and the *vomito* or yellow fever ceases. The mean heat of this season is 71 deg. of Fahrenheit, but whilst the north winds are blowing, the thermometer sometimes descends to 60 deg. Rain is not rare during this season, but the showers are only of short duration. During the summer the heat is great; the mean temperature is about 81 deg. The rains are not heavy before June, but in that month they descend in torrents nearly every day for several hours. In July alone about fifteen inches of rain fall, or two-thirds of the mean annual quantity at London.

Ascent to the Table-Lands.

The steep ascent which bounds this tract on the west rises in some places in terraces which lie between the declivities, and in such parts the ascent occupies a considerable space; but in other parts it rises from 5000 to 6000 feet in a distance generally not exceeding ten miles in width, and frequently much less. The acclivity is so steep, that in the whole line there are only two places where it is practicable for carriages, namely at Xalapa, near Vera Cruz, and at Saltillo, west of Monterey, though its whole length does not fall short of 600 miles.

Table-Lands.

The physical feature of Mexico is a high table-land, bearing some aspect in this respect to the southern peninsula of India. These immense plains, situated at an elevation of from 6000 to 8000 feet above the level of the ocean, have occasional inequalities of surface; lofty mountains and luxuriant valleys diversify the appearance of the country in some parts; but in general a continuous level, as smooth almost as the ocean, extends for upwards of 1500 miles through the interior of Mexico, and to the territory of the United States. Hence, while the communication between the city of Mexico and the eastern and western sea-coasts is extremely difficult, and on some portions of the routes can be carried on only by mules, there is nothing to prevent wheel-carriages from running from the capital to Santa Fe, and thence to St. Louis, or other places on the Mississippi.

On the side of the Pacific, the table-land of Anahuac approaches very near the sea. In some places the high mountain masses advance to the very shores; in others, a narrow level tract intervenes; but the table land is divided from the Gulf of Mexico by a low plain, called the Plain of Cuetlachtlan, which extends about 100 miles inland.

The surface of the table-land of Anahuac, which is reached from the Plain of Cuetlachtlan by a very rapid ascent, consists of a considerable number of plains with a level or undulating surface. These plains are generally of considerable extent, measuring in length from 40 to 200 miles and more; and in width from 20 to 100 miles. These plains are separated from each other by ranges of hills, which rise to 500 or 600 feet above their level; but the plains themselves vary in their elevation; the most extensive being from 5000 to 9000 feet above the sea-level, whilst some smaller ones are much lower.

That portion of the table-land which spreads from the Plains of *Thascalá* and *Mexico*, south and south-east, and which, as far as the isthmus of Tehuantepec, is called the table-land of *Mixtecapan*, appears not to rise more than 5,000 feet on an average. Towards the Pacific, however, it is indented by wide valleys which extend nearly north and south, and open towards the sea; but even these valleys are of considerable height. The town of Oaxaca, which lies in the principal valley, is 4,800 feet above the sea, and the adjacent higher ground, on which the ruins of the Palace of Mida are found, is 5,300 feet high. But as we proceed along the sea to the N. W. and approach the harbour of Acapulco, the table-land is broken by deep valleys, which extend east and west. The level of these valleys declines as they approach the Pacific, and at the same time they become narrower. The road from Mexico to Acapulco passes through four of them. The valley of Istla, nearest to the plain of Tenochtitlan, is 3,226 feet, the valley of Mescala 1,696 feet, that of Papagallo 627, and that of Peregrino, nearest the Pacific, is 525 feet above the level of the sea.

The Plain of *Chihuáhua*, which extends along the eastern base of the Sierra Madre, may be considered as a continuation of the table-land of San Louis de Potosi, not being separated from it by a range of mountains or any other marked boundary-line, except that the northern part of the table-land of Potosi (between 23° and 24° N. lat.) gradually assumes that aspect of sterility which characterises the Plain of Chihuáhua. This plain extends from south-south-east to north-north-west more than 600 miles, and is terminated on the north by a line drawn from the Presidio de S. Bernardino to the Paso del Norte, near the parallel of 32°. Its width varies from 150 to 200 miles. At its southern extremity, where it is contiguous to the table-land of San Louis de Potosi, it may be nearly 6,000 feet above the sea-level; but it lowers towards the north. This immense tract of country may be compared with some of the steppes of Asia. We do not know its elevation above the sea, but Humboldt estimates that of the country along the banks of the Rio del Norte at about 2,000 feet, an estimate which appears rather too low than too high. But towards the south the country certainly rises to a much greater height, a fact which is shown by the course of the rivers, which here run in the opposite direction to those of Sonora—namely, from south to north. The surface of this plain is nearly level. The soil is strongly impregnated with nitre, muriate of soda, and carbonate of potash. It is entirely destitute of trees, except along the water-courses, which are skirted by poplars. In the rainy season it is covered with grass, which affords pasture for sheep; in the dry season it is without verdure, except along the rivers. Some portions are covered with small sharp stones. In those districts which are at some distance from the rivers, there are numerous dry salt-lakes, from which large quantities of salt are collected by the inhabitants. These salt lakes render the country excessively unhealthy; for whenever there is any wind, the air is filled with saline particles and dust, which oppress respiration and cause numerous diseases. The rivers, along which alone the cultivated tracts occur, run in beds several feet under the surface of the plain, and all terminate (with the exception of the Rio Conchos) in lakes without outlets, like those in the steppes of Asia. The most remarkable are the Rio de las Casas Grandes, the Conchos, and the Rio Grande of the Plain.

Mountains.

The steep ascent above described constitutes the outer edge of the elevated plains of Anahuac, which extends westward to a great distance. The edge itself is lined by a continuous series of hills, rising in general only to a moderate elevation above the table-lands; but some of them attain a great height, as the Coffre de Perote, near the road leading from Vera Cruz to Mexico, which is 13,415 feet

above the level of the sea, and the peak of Origida, which attains a height of 17,373 feet.

It is in strict geography improper to denominate the mountains of Mexico a prolongation of the Andine chain of South America. So far is this from being the case, that long before the Andes have reached the isthmus of Panama, they have dwindled into inconsiderable hillocks; and in Verragua, the *Sierra de Cantagua* runs in an opposite direction to the Andes, as if to interrupt their extension into North America. In the Mexican province of Oaxaca, the chain occupies the centre of the isthmus. On this part of the chain there is a point so elevated that both the Atlantic and Pacific are visible from it. This would indicate an elevation of 7700 feet above the sea. From eighteen and a half to twenty-one degrees the Cordillera stretches from north to south. Of this chain "the mountain of smoke," a volcano covered with perpetual snow, is one of the most elevated summits in all Mexico. Humboldt estimates it to be 17,735 feet above the level of the sea. There are many other peaks of nearly an equal altitude. The mean elevation of the whole range, of which these summits make a part, is 9842 feet of absolute elevation. The "star mountain," which is the highest peak in all Mexico, and which is visible from Vera Cruz, is 17,876 feet above the level of the sea, and is the first part of the continent which is visible to navigators. From the north-eastern part of the intendency of Mexico, the chain assumes the name of *Sierra Madre*, and then leaving the eastern quarter, it runs north-west to Guanajuato. North of this city it becomes of an extraordinary breadth, dividing immediately into three branches, of which the most eastern runs in the direction of the coast, and is lost in the province of New Leon. The western branch passes to the north as far as the source of the Rio Gila. From its western side many lateral chains stretch south-west to the Gulf of California. The middle branch of the Sierra Madre, which may be viewed as the central chain of the Mexican Alps, stretches northwardly into the province of New Mexico, and finally terminates in latitude 41 deg., where it divides the waters which flow into the Pacific from those which flow into the Atlantic. From this other ranges of mountains meet from different directions, and again spread out northwardly, under the appellation of the Rocky Mountains. No mountain ridge connects the Sierra Madre with the Rocky Mountains.

CHAPTER II.

RIVERS, LAKES, BAYS AND GULFS.

CONSIDERING the extent of Mexico, its large rivers are very few. The table land of Anahuac is nearly destitute of rivers on account of the dryness of the atmosphere and the aridity of the soil. The few streams are only navigable for a short distance from the sea. They descend from great heights, in a comparatively short course, and are very shallow.

Rio Bravo, or Rio Grande del Norte.

This, the chief river in Mexico, rises in lat. 40 d. 12 m. N., and 111 d. 30 m. W. long., immediately west of the sources of the Platte and Arkansas. It has several large tributaries. For two hundred miles above Santa Fe, it runs through a valley bounded on both sides by snowy mountains. The whole course of the Rio del Norte is at least 2000 miles, 540 of which are to the N. W. of Santa Fe. It is not navigable in any part of its course, owing to sand-bars in the flat country,

and to mountains in the upper part of its course. Small boats can ascend only about 200 miles from the Gulf. There is a bar at its mouth with only seven feet of water. Small schooners, however, can ascend to Matamoras.

The author of "Commerce of the Prairies," thus speaks of this river:—

"The famous Rio del Norte is so shallow for the most part of the year, that Indian canoes can scarcely float in it. Its navigation is also obstructed by frequent shoals and rippling sections, for a distance of more than a thousand miles below Santa Fe. Notwithstanding the numerous tributary streams which would be supposed to pour their contents into the Rio del Norte, very few reach their destination before they are completely exhausted. The most considerable, *Rio Puerco*, although at least a thousand miles in length, is dry at its mouth for a portion of the year. It is, then, no wonder that this 'Great River of the North' decreases in volume of water as it descends. In fact, above the region of tide-water, it is almost everywhere fordable during most of the year. Its banks are generally very low, and yet, owing to the disproportionate width of the channel, (which is generally 350 yards,) it is not subject to inundations. Its only rises are those of the annual freshets, caused by the melting of the snows in the mountains."

Rio Sacramento.

This river empties into the Bay of San Francisco, in Upper California. One of its principal branches rises in the Sierra Nevada, about 300 miles N. E. from the Bay; another large branch has its source in the same range, about 200 miles N. of the Bay.

The Colorado.

This river empties into the Gulf of California. It is made up of several small ones. It is a little above 600 miles in length. It receives the appellation of Colorado or coloured river, from its waters being coloured by the rains falling on a soil of red clay, through which it passes. It is a deep and copious stream, capable of being navigated by square-rigged vessels, for but about 30 miles. Throughout its whole course, its banks are said to be entirely destitute of timber; and it is doubtless true that for 300 miles there is not a tree growing near it of ten inches in diameter.

Rio Grande—called also the Rio Santiago.

This is one of the most considerable rivers in Mexico. It rises to the east of the volcano of Toluca, and in the first part of its course is called *Rio Lerena*. It passes through the lake of Chapala, and pursues a rapid course to the Pacific, forming an Estuary at its mouth in which there are several islands; on its southern side is the well known port of San Blas. The whole length of the river is rising 500 miles.

Rio Panuco.

This river may be considered as rising in the lake of Zumpango, adjacent to the city of Mexico. In its upper course it is so very swift, and so frequently interrupted by shoals and rapids, that it is said to be navigable for boats only in a few places. In the upper part it is called Tula. It becomes navigable, however, about 170 miles from its mouth. Ten miles lower down it is joined by the Rio Lamoin, which flows from the west, and is then called the Rio Panuco. Vessels drawing not more than twelve feet of water may go up to Panuco, eighty miles

from its mouth. It enters the Gulf of Mexico at Tampico, after a winding course of about 400 miles. The port of Tampico is formed by its mouth, but is crossed by a bar, which has generally not more than twelve feet of water.

The other rivers in Mexico are not of much importance. None of them are navigable for any considerable distance.

LAKES.

The lakes are very numerous, and occupy a considerable portion of the plains; one tenth of the valley of Mexico is covered by lakes. The largest lake is that of Chapala, which is traversed by the Rio Santiago. It is about 90 miles long, and from 12 to 18 miles wide.

BAYS AND GULFS.

The chief Bays or Gulfs are those of Tehuantepec, and the large inland gulf of California. The first lies on the Pacific, in 16 d. N. lat., and is 125 miles across. The Gulf of California is a very large inland sea, stretching 880 miles from S. E. to N. W. The entrance to this Gulf, between Cape St. Lucas, the S. E. point of California, and the mouth of the El Ruso on the eastward, is 200 miles across; and from thence as far north as lat. 27 d., the average breadth is from 120 to 150 miles; from thence to the head it seldom exceeds 60 miles. The printed maps of this Gulf are all sadly erroneous.

Gulf of Mexico.

This Gulf extends between the 18th and 30th parallels of north latitude, and is nearly of a circular form, but somewhat elongated from east to west. In the latter direction it is 1,150 miles long; in the transverse direction it is about 930. It opens in a S. E. direction, between the peninsula of Yucatan and Florida, or between the Capes of Catoche and Sable, which are about 465 miles distant from each other. The island of Cuba divides this opening into two channels; the one to the S. W. communicating with the Sea of the Antilles, and the other to the N. E. with the Atlantic, by means of the straits of the Bahamas or Florida. South from the mouth of the Rio del Norte round about to the mouth of the Rio Alvarado, an extent of 600 miles, the Gulf does not present a single good port, as Vera Cruz is merely a bad anchorage amidst shallows. The Mexican coast may be considered as a sort of dyke, against which, the waves, continually agitated by the trade winds blowing from E. to W., throw up the sands carried by the violent motion. The rivers descending from the Sierra Madre have also contributed to increase these sands, and the land is gaining on the sea. No vessel drawing more than 12 1-2 inches of water can pass over these sand-bars without danger of getting aground. In the middle of the Gulf, the winds blow regularly from the N. E., but they vary considerably on approaching the shore.

CHAPTER III.

CIVIL DIVISIONS, CITIES, TOWNS, ETC.

The territory of Mexico is made up of nineteen states, and the territories of New Mexico, California, Colima and Tlascalala.

I.—*Yucatan*.*

This is the most easterly state of Mexico. The isthmus which connects it with the continent of North America, is but 120 miles wide. Its population is about 500,000. The soil is very fertile, and when under proper cultivation, produces great crops of cotton, indigo, tobacco, pepper, sugar cane, Indian corn, and other kinds of grain. The scarcity of water in the central parts of the state renders the crops variable; and years occur in which the poorer classes are driven to seek subsistence on roots. Cattle, fowls and bees are very numerous; wax and honey plentiful; but there are no mines. The forests abound with wild beasts. The principal article of commerce is logwood.

Merida, the capital, is about twenty-four miles from the sea, on an arid plain. It carries on some commerce in agricultural produce, by means of the small harbour of Sisal, which has but little depth of water. Population, 32,000.

Campeche, on the bay of the same name, has a harbour, but which is not safe. It exports a considerable quantity of wax and Campeche wood. Population, 19,000.

II.—*Tabasco*.

The State of Tabasco extends from the Rio Pacaitun to the Rio Huasacualco, more than 200 miles along the shore, and about 50 or 60 miles inland. The surface is level, and mostly subject to inundations.

Victoria, or Tabasco, the capital, is built on an island at the mouth of the Rio Tabasco. It has a harbour, and carries on some trade in the produce of the country. The population is 4000.

III.—*Chiapa*.

The State of Chiapa, until the year 1825, belonged to Guatemala; in that year it joined the confederation of the States of Mexico. Chiapa is separated from the Gulf of Mexico by Tabasco. The population consists principally of Indians, who speak five different languages.

Ciudad de las Casas (formerly Ciudad Real,) the capital, is situated in a fertile valley: it has a university, and 3800 inhabitants.

At the north-eastern angle of this state, near the boundary of Yucatan and Tabasco, in a thick forest, are ruins, apparently those of a large city. The character of the building, as well as of the ornaments, differs greatly from that of all other ancient edifices in America. These remains are called the ruins of Palenque, from a neighbouring village of that name. It was here that Messrs. Stephens and Catherwood made most of their ingenious researches.

IV.—*Oaxaca*.

The State of Oaxaca comprehends the southern portion of the isthmus of Tehuantepec and the table-land of Mixtecapan: it extends along the Pacific, with a coast line of more than 360 miles. It is one of the best cultivated and most populous parts of Mexico, and produces, in addition to cochineal, great quantities of indigo and cotton. Silk is got from a species of wild silk-worm.

Oaxaca, the capital, situated in a fertile valley, 4,800 feet above the sea, is well built, and contains some fine squares and public edifices; it has also an aqueduct.

* For an account of the Political revolution that has lately occurred in Yucatan, see Appendix. *

Tehuantepec, situated at the mouth of the Rio Chimalapa, has a harbour, the entrance of which is very dangerous, and not deep enough for large vessels. The population is 7,000 persons. There are remains of ancient buildings in several parts of this state.

V.—Vera Cruz.

The State of Vera Cruz comprehends a small portion of the isthmus of Tehuantepec, and the greater part of the plain of Cuatlachlan, with the eastern declivity of the table-land of Anahuac; a small portion of the table-land, and also the mountains of Orizava and Cofre de Perote belong to it.

Vera Cruz is the principal port in Mexico. It lies on a low sandy shore, intersected with marshes which extend for miles along the coast. The port is, properly speaking, an open roadstead, protected only by a shoal, and is very dangerous in winter, when the north winds blow. It is very small, and can contain but about 30 vessels.

The little island of San Juan de Ulloa, which is entirely covered with the fortress, is some five or six hundred yards from the mole or quay at Vera Cruz, between which points all the commercial shipping enters. A very narrow channel affords the only passage for vessels of war, which must of necessity pass immediately under the guns of the fort. The fortress of San Juan de Ulloa has always been looked upon as one of the strongest in the world. When it was blown up, in 1839, by the French, the armament was in a most wretched condition, and as to scientific engineers and artillerymen, there were none. Even then it would have been no holiday affair had it not been for the accidental explosion of the magazine.

But Vera Cruz is much more effectually protected than by all her fortifications, by the norther and *vomito* (yellow fever.) The former have been the terror of all seamen since the discovery of the country. The latter prevails on all the Atlantic coast of Mexico during the whole year, and with the greatest malignancy for two thirds of the year; and it so happens that the few months of comparative exemption from the ravages of the yellow fever, are precisely those when the northers prevail with the most destructive violence. To illustrate the ferocity of these northers, we quote the following incident from a recent traveller. "Soon after my arrival," says he, "I gave to a servant some clothing to be washed; but he soon returned with my bundle and informed me that the washer-woman refused to take the clothes unless I would release her from all responsibility if a norther should carry them away: whereupon assuming the hazard, on the following day, upon short notice, the winds came and scattered my clothing like kites in the air, and I never saw it more." The inhabitants, on the first coming of the storm, are compelled immediately to tightly bar their doors and windows, stopping up the key-holes and every other crevice, to prevent light articles in the house from being disturbed, as also their eyes from being put out by the sand.

The health of Vera Cruz is perhaps worse than that of any other place on the habitable globe, and it is calculated that one-fifth of its inhabitants annually perish. The sickness of Vera Cruz is attributed to the increased intensity of the sun's heat, reflected from the high white sand-hills that overlook the town, as also from the poisonous vapour which arises from the stagnant waters of the lakes and swamps which surround the city. The venomous insects that infest that hot region, aid likewise in no small degree, by never leaving the inhabitants to repose, and constantly causing feverish excitement and irritation to promote disease.

The city of Vera Cruz is enclosed by a continued wall of coral-stone and brick. The streets are paved with stone shipped from Quincy, Mass. The

town is laid off in squares, and the houses are a solid mass of buildings covering the whole squares. Many of the houses are large, some three stories high, built in the old Spanish or Moorish styles, and generally enclosing a square court with covered galleries. They have flat roofs, glass windows, and are well adapted to the climate. The whole town, as well as the castle, is built of coral, and the lime that forms the cement, is of the same material. There is one tolerably good square, of which the government-house forms one side and the principal church the other. The foot-paths are frequently under piazzas, a great accommodation to travellers, protecting them from the sultry heat of the sun and the heavy rains, which descend in torrents during the wet season. Sixteen cupolas are counted from the sea, but only six churches are now in use. Indeed, nearly all the churches, nunneries and monasteries have been abandoned since the place has been lost to the Spaniards. Nothing is more repulsive to strangers accustomed to the bustle of American cities, than the death-like appearance of the place. Of any other city it would be a disgrace to say the grass grows in the streets, but here it would be considered a compliment, for no vegetation is to be observed even for miles around, and fish is the only article of provision not brought from a distance. The only water fit to drink is what falls from the clouds, and is preserved in tanks. Living at the hotels is very expensive. Milk is scarcely to be had, as not a cow is kept within many miles, and what perhaps is peculiar to Vera Cruz, there is not a garden even near it. Society here is extremely confined, and morality at a very low ebb. Few of the European merchants are married. The streets are filled with carrion vultures, and act as scavengers for the place. The population does not exceed 6,500. It was here that Cortes landed to commence his ever-memorable expedition, although this is not the town which he founded of that name, which was about six miles distant.

Xalapa, or *Jalapa*, the capital of the state, is situated on the steep declivity of the table-land, about 4,340 feet above the level of the sea. It is a pleasant town, and the depôt between Vera Cruz and Mexico. An annual fair is held here, which is much frequented. It contains eight churches, a good school for drawing, and 13,000 inhabitants.

Perote, situated on the edge of the table-land, 8,300 feet above the sea, has a population of 10,000. It contains one of the four castles or fortresses erected by the Spanish government in Mexico. A portion of the prisoners taken in the recent Santa Fe expedition, were sent to this place.

Alvarado, at the mouth of the Rio Alvarado, has a small harbour, some little trade, and 1,600 inhabitants.

VI.—*Puebla*.

The State of *Puebla* comprehends a large portion of the table-land of *Tlascal*, and of its southern declivity, having only a low and comparatively narrow tract along the coast of the Pacific, about 65 miles long.

La Puebla de los Angeles, the capital, contains between 60,000 and 70,000 inhabitants. It is well built, with straight and wide streets, and contains many fine houses. The cathedral, which stands in a large square, is a magnificent edifice, and is rich in gold and silver ornaments.

VII.—*Tlascal*.

The territory of *Tlascal* is enclosed by the state of *Puebla*. It contains a population of Indians, and of mixed races, which, even under the Spanish dominion, enjoyed several privileges which had been granted to them for having aided the Spaniards in the conquest of Mexico under Cortes. Their privileges

and independence have been confirmed by the republican government. The inhabitants are chiefly occupied with agriculture.

Tlascala, or Tlaxcallan, the capital, contains a population of 4,000 persons. The walls were erected long before the arrival of the Europeans.

VIII.—*Mexico.*

The State of Mexico lies between 16 d. 34 m. and 20 d. 10 m. N. lat. The best cultivated portion is the table-land, where wheat and the fruits of Europe are grown, as well as the maguey and the Indian corn. The southern districts are very thinly peopled. In these fertile valleys the tropical productions succeed.

Tezcuco, the capital, is situated on the plain of Tenochtitlan, on the east side of the lake of Tezcuco, and about thirty miles from Mexico. It has some manufactures of cotton, and about 5,000 inhabitants.

Acapulco is the sea-port of Mexico on the Pacific. It was the seat of the Spanish trade with the Phillipine Isles, and the store-house of immense wealth. Its port is a basin cut from the solid rock, and is capable of receiving the largest vessels. It is very hot and unhealthy, and contains about 4000 inhabitants, chiefly negroes.

IX.—*The Federal District.*

The Federal District is surrounded by the State of Mexico, and comprehends only the environs of the metropolis, in the centre of the plain or valley of Tenochtitlan.

The Valley of Mexico.

Midway across the continent, somewhat nearer the Pacific than the Atlantic, at an elevation of nearly 7500 feet, is the celebrated valley of Mexico. It is of an oval form, about 120 miles in circumference, and is encompassed by a towering rampart of porphyritic rocks, which nature seems to have provided, though ineffectually, to protect it from invasion. The appearance of the valley is that of an oval basin surrounded on all sides with mountains of every degree of elevation, and of every variety of appearance, from a little rugged promontory to Pocatepetl, as some say, the highest mountain in Mexico, and even the highest upon the continent, covered with perpetual snow, 10,400 feet higher than the city itself. No less than five lakes spread over the valley, occupying at least one-tenth of its surface. "Thus at one view," remarks a late writer, "bursts upon the astonished traveller, village, city, lakes, plains, and mountains, altogether forming a *tout ensemble* of the most imposing character. I could only admire the extensive fields spread out before me, for the valley of Mexico is justly renowned for its fertility. Thus, while I might upon the right hand be attracted by an extensive meadow appropriated for grazing, on the left, I would be greeted by the pleasing prospect of miles in extent, and as far as the eye could reach, of lands cultivated alone in maize or Indian corn. And while now I would arrive at verdant nooks, with acres of land cultivated in *chili* or red pepper—of which some individuals, from a single crop of chili alone, realize the immense sum of \$50,000,—and then I would come upon the green and flowery fields, cultivated to feed the cochineal insect."

"The view of the valley of Mexico is certainly beautiful and grand, and but for the painful absence of timber, and the vast sterility of much of its territory, might perhaps be the most magnificent sight anywhere to behold upon the face of the globe. As I progressed, I was soon brought in bold view by my close contact with the lake region. One of these lakes, near the city of Mexico, I was in-

former, was thirty miles in length, and has the appearance of a bay or port to the great city. There is on the border of the lake hot springs, the waters of which are used for bathing purposes. As the diligencia entered on the great causeway which separates Lake Cholco from Xochicalo, a passenger informed me that this bridge was not only made by the Aztecs, but was the same identical track which Cortes and his travellers passed on the 8th of November, 1519, the day on which they first set foot in the city of Mexico."

Description of the City.

The city of Mexico is said to be the finest built city on the American continent. In the principal streets the houses are all constructed on the strictest architectural rules. The first buildings were erected by Cortes, who did every thing well, from writing a couplet to conquering an empire. Many of the finest buildings in Mexico are still owned by his descendants. The public square is said to be unsurpassed by any in the world; it contains some twelve or fifteen acres paved with stone. The Cathedral covers one entire side, the Palace another; the western side is occupied by a row of very high and substantial houses, the second stories of which project into the street the width of the pavement; the lower stories are occupied by the principal retail merchants of the city. The most of these houses were built by Cortes, who, with his characteristic sagacity, and an avarice which equally characterized him in the latter part of his life, selected the best portion of the city for himself.

The President's Palace, formerly the palace of the viceroys, is an immense building of three stories high, about five hundred feet in length, and three hundred and fifty wide; it stands on the site of the palace of Montezuma, which was destroyed by Cortes. It is difficult to conceive of so much stone and mortar being put together in a less tasteful and imposing shape. It has much more the appearance of a cotton factory or a penitentiary, than what it really is. Only a very small part of this palace is appropriated to the residence of the President. All the public offices are here, including heads of the different departments, ministers of justice, treasury, &c. The halls of the deputies and of the Senate, are in the same building, and also that of the botanic garden.

The Cathedral, which occupies the site of the great idol temple of Montezuma, is five hundred feet long by four hundred and twenty wide. Like all the other churches in Mexico, it is built in the gothic style. The walls, of several feet in thickness, are made of unhewn stone and lime.

The streets of Mexico are uncommonly wide, much more so than is necessary, considering that they are not obstructed, as in our city, by drays and wagons. The side-walks are uncommonly narrow. The streets are all paved with round stones; the side-walks with very rough flat ones. The houses on the principal streets are all two and three stories high. The walls are built of rough stones, of all shapes and sizes, and large quantities of lime mortar. The streets cross each other at right angles, dividing the whole city into squares. Each one of these squares is called a street, and has a separate name. Instead of designating the street in its whole extent by one name, each side of every square has a different name, and names which sound to Protestant ears very much like a violation of the third article of the decalogue, such as the street of Jesus, and the street of the Holy Ghost. In most of these streets there is a church, which gives name to the street on which it stands. In many instances these churches and convents cover the whole square, not with separate buildings, but one single edifice, with the usual court or open space in the centre. There is not, I believe, a house in the city without this court, of greater or less dimensions, in proportion to the size of the building. There is only one door on the lower story, and that high enough for a coach to pass through. It opens

into the court through which you pass to the steps leading to the upper story, where alone every body lives, except the lowest classes. In all the establishments of the better classes, the basement story is only occupied by the servants, and as lumber rooms, and what appears very strange, as stables. There is not in the whole city such a separate building as a stable. "In visiting Count Certuna," says Mr. Thompson, "whose whole establishment is altogether princely, I found this court on the ground floor used as a stable, and passed through rows of horses and carriages, to make my way to the most spacious halls, filled with fine paintings of the great masters, and furnished throughout in a style altogether gorgeous." In some of the large private buildings, thirty and forty different families reside; each one having rented one or two rooms, all entering at the only outside door into the court, which is the common property of all, and from which each one has an entrance into his own rooms on the ground floor or the gallery above, which runs all around the building. The area of Mexico does not exceed two miles in length and a mile and a half in width, a very small space to be occupied by a population of nearly 200,000. But it is not at all surprising, when you see thirty or forty families all huddled away in one house, and consider what a large number sleep in the open air in that delightful climate. How pure must be the atmosphere when Mexico is so remarkably healthy, notwithstanding such a crowded and filthy mode of living, and with a tropical sun shining upon the moist surface of the whole valley!

It is a little curious, that whilst the buildings and population of Mexico are thus crowded into so small a space, and that rents are three times as high as in New-York, yet all around the city there is a vacant ground, and as dry as the city itself, which may be had almost for the taking. "I was riding out with a friend one evening," says Mr. Thompson, "when he showed me a square containing between five or six acres, just on the outskirts of the city, and not more than half a mile from the public square, which he had just purchased for four hundred dollars!"

The city is partly supplied with provisions and vegetables by small boats, which bring them over the Lake of Tezcuco; but as the lake is very shallow in January and February, the supply is then generally stopped, and the city depends, especially for vegetables, on the supply by the canal of Iztapalapan, which leads from the Lake of Xochimilco to the town. This canal is narrow, but always covered with small canoes loaded with fruits and vegetables: it passes through the chinampas, or floating gardens, which, in their present state, are long narrow strips of ground, redeemed from the surrounding swamp, and intersected by small canals. They are well cultivated, abound in fine vegetables, and their edges are planted with poplars. It is stated that they originally consisted of wooden rafts, covered with earth, and floated about in the lake when it was full of water, whence their name is derived. At present they are stationary, but it is said that there are still some floating gardens in the Lake Xochimilco.

The Halls of the Montezumas.

Montezuma II. ascended the Mexican throne A. D. 1502, at the age of 23, before Mexico had been discovered by Europeans. He died 30th June, 1520, in the 42d year of his age, of wounds inflicted by the Spanish discoverers, whom he had invited to his royal palace. Historians agree in admiring his character.

On ascending the throne, not content with the spacious residence of his father, he erected another, much more magnificent. So vast was this great structure, that, as one historian informs us, the space covered by its terraced roof, might have afforded ample room for thirty knights to run their courses in a regular tourney. His father's palace, although not so high, was so extensive that the visitors were too much fatigued in wandering through the apartments ever to

see the whole of them. The palaces were built of red-stone, ornamented with marble, the arms of the Montezuma family (an eagle bearing a tiger in his talons) being sculptured over the main entrance. Crystal fountains, fed by great reservoirs on the neighbouring hills, played in the vast halls and gardens, and supplied water in hundreds of marble baths in the interior of the palaces. Crowds of nobles and military chieftains were continually sauntering through the halls, or loitering away their hours in attendance on the court. Rich carvings in wood adorned the ceilings, beautiful mats of palm-leaf covered the floors. The walls were hung with cotton richly stained, the skins of wild animals, or gorgeous draperies of feather-work, wrought in imitation of birds, insects, and flowers, in glowing radiance of colours. Clouds of incense from golden censers diffused intoxicating odours through splendid apartments, occupied by nine hundred and eighty wives and 5,000 slaves of Montezuma.

This building was totally destroyed by Cortes, and the President's Palace now stands on its site.

X.—*Querétaro.*

The State of Querétaro, lying between 20 d. and 22 d. N. lat., comprehends a great part of the table-land of Querétaro, which, within the state, is about 6,300 feet above the level of the sea. It is comparatively populous and fertile, producing all the grains and fruits of Mexico.

Querétaro, the capital, is distinguished by its fine buildings and its aqueduct. The population amounts to about 40,000, of which number one third are Indians.

XI.—*Guanaxuato.*

The State of Guanaxuato extends over a portion of the table-land of Querétaro, which, within its limits, has an elevation of about 6000 feet. It is the smallest of the Mexican states, but the most populous, and probably also the richest.

Guanaxuato, the capital, is situated in a ravine in the midst of the mines, 7,294 feet above the sea. It contains a mint and many fine buildings.

XII.—*Michoacan.*

The State of Michoacan was formerly the intendencia of Valladolid; but this name was changed at the time of the union of the Mexican states, into that of an ancient Indian kingdom, which existed here before the Spanish conquest.

Valladolid, at present called Morelia, in honour of the Mexican general Morelos, is the capital. It is situated in a plain 6,434 feet above the sea; and contains 18,000 inhabitants. Some of the public buildings are very good; among others the college, which is esteemed one of the best in Mexico: the cathedral is a magnificent edifice, and the aqueduct, by which the town is supplied with good spring-water, is handsomer than that of Mexico, and built of stone.

XIII.—*Colima.*

The territory of Colima is situated on the shores of the Pacific, where it occupies a coast line of about 100 miles. Its surface, properly speaking, is not mountainous, but a plain, on which there are several high hills and the elevated volcano of Colima. The climate is consequently hot; and, as the soil is fertile, it yields many tropical products, particularly cotton of excellent quality. Nearly all the inhabitants are Indians, who, at their own request, have a gov-

ernment independent of that of the state of Xalisco, to which they formerly belonged.

Colima, the capital, is situated at the foot of the volcano of the same name, in a very fertile plain.

XIV.—*Jalisco or Xalisco.*

The State of Jalisco or Xalisco was formerly the province of Guadalajara. The low country north of the river Santiago, consists of extensive plains, and contains very few hills. The countries along the shores of the Pacific are more covered with forests than any other part of Mexico.

Guadalajara, the second city in Mexico, is situated in a fertile plain not far from the banks of the Rio Santiago, below the great cataracts. It contains about 60,000 inhabitants. It has a fine cathedral, many churches and convents; and the streets are lined by colonnades. The commerce of Guadalajara with the adjacent countries and the port of San Blas, is considerable.

San Blas, or San Blasio, is a good harbour at the mouth of the Rio Santiago, on a rock, surrounded by low marshes, which render the climate very unhealthy. During the rains it is almost entirely abandoned by the inhabitants; who, at other times, amount to about 3,000 in number. Vessels are built here; and much salt is collected in the neighbourhood. The trade is considerable, but has lately much decreased.

XV.—*Zacatecas.*

The State of Zacatecas comprehends the northern portion of the table-land of Querétaro, and the southern part of the plain of Chihuahua; the boundary line between them running some miles north of the town of Zacatecas, and thence to Sombrerete. Both portions have a very arid soil, but the table-land of Querétaro contains many fertile districts.

Zacatecas, the capital, stands in a ravine between high hills, all of which contain veins of silver. Its churches are large buildings, the stone work of which is richly decorated. The number of inhabitants is estimated at more than 30,000. A great portion of the jalap exported from Mexico is collected in the neighbouring hills and valleys.

XVI.—*San Luis Potosi.*

The State of San Luis Potosi comprehends the southern portion of the plain of Chihuahua, and its declivity towards the gulf of Mexico and the plain of Monterey. The surface is in many places uneven and rugged, and little cultivated. The numerous mines produce silver, copper, tin, and brimstone.

San Luis Potosi, the capital, is situated in a pleasant valley near the sources of the river Tamoin, a branch of the Rio Panuco. It contains 16,000 inhabitants, who carry on some trade.

XVII.—*Durango.*

The State of Durango occupies the highest and widest part of the Sierra Madre, and also a considerable portion of the plain of Chihuahua. The eastern declivity of the Sierra Madre is the more fertile district, and it is better cultivated and more populous than the plain, which is nearly a desert, except along the courses of the rivers.

Durango, at present called La Ciudad Victoria, is a regularly built town, situated on a plain more than 6,848 feet above the sea. In winter the thermometer

descends many degrees below the freezing point. The inhabitants, amounting to 22,000, are industrious, and are partly occupied in the manufacture of wool, leather, and in cabinet-work. There are some mines in the neighbourhood, and a mint in the town. Numerous herds of cattle are brought from the plain to the market of Durango.

XVIII.—*New Leon.*

The State of New Leon (Nuevo Leon) extends over a large part of the plain of Monterey and the mountain tract lying between it and the Rio del Norte. The plain is very little known. It appears to consist of extensive levels, here and there intersected by hills of moderate elevation, and exhibits a good deal of fertility, but is little cultivated. There are few important mines in the mountains of the northern districts. Large herds of cattle pasture on the plains. The population, which is very small, consists chiefly of whites.

Monterey, the capital, with 15,000, is the seat of a Bishop, and derives its importance from the neighbourhood of the mines.

XIX.—*Tamaulipas.*

The State of Tamaulipas extends along the coast of the gulf of Mexico from the Rio Panuco to the Rio del Norte, which separates it from Texas. The coast, which is above 350 miles in length, is lined with long lagunes from four to eighteen miles wide, which are separated from the sea by long narrow bands of sand. This circumstance, added to the small depth of the sea along the whole extent of coast, and the bars which occur at the mouths of the rivers, renders the navigation along the shore of this State very difficult even for small vessels, and quite impracticable for large ones. The width of the country averages about 70 miles, except along the banks of the Rio Grande del Norte, where it may be from 150 to 180 miles wide. The surface is mostly level, and little elevated above the sea. The soil along the beach is sandy, but more inland it is of considerable fertility, and partly covered with forests. Other portions are prairie land without trees.

Tampico de Tamaulipas is situated on a peninsula or neck of land about four hundred yards wide, formed by the river Panuco on one side, and the Laguna del Barpintero on the other. It is about six miles from the sea. At the mouth of this river there is an insignificant fortification of three or four old guns, more likely to injure those who discharge them, than those against whom they are directed. The bar at the mouth of the river admits of vessels drawing from seven to nine feet water, according to the winds and season of the year.

Tampico is susceptible of being made a very strong military position, at a very moderate expense, by simply cutting a ditch and running a breast-work across the neck of land above and below the town, and strengthening the breast-work by bastions at either extremity of the line, at the river and at the lake. On the south-eastern side, or nearest the sea, the land is low, and across the neck a canal has been cut, which unites the river with the lake. This canal could readily be made to form the basis of the fortifications on that side. On the upper side or entrance from Altamira, the land is high and offers some remarkably fine sites for defence of that approach, the only approach that could be used by an enemy not having command of the river.

Tampico is not absolutely commanded by any height near enough to throw an effective point blank shot, though from the hills below the town, on the opposite side of the river, shot and shells can be thrown into the south-eastern part of the town. Immediately opposite the town, an extensive salt-marsh and lake prevent any approach of an enemy's force.

In its present state of defence, Tampico could make little or no resistance against a force of two thousand men, whilst the same number as a garrison could—when the defensive works above mentioned were completed—by having the command of the river, hold it against any force that could be brought against it.

Nuevo Santander, with a population of 3,000, is situated on the banks of the Rio Santander, about thirty miles from the sea. The harbour is at Soto la Marina, further down the river, which has only from six to seven feet water on the bar at its mouth.

Matamoras, on the Rio Grande del Norte, has a harbour for small vessels, and is a new and thriving commercial town. Population, 10,000.

XX.—*Cohahuila.*

The State of Cohahuila is between Nuevo Leon and Chihuahua, entirely on the plain of Chihuahua. The southern districts have a level surface, interrupted by a few hills of moderate elevation, which occur at great distance from each other. The soil is very arid, and the vegetation scanty. These southern districts serve only as a pasture-ground for sheep, and are nowhere cultivated to any extent. The northern districts surrounding the river Sabinos, an affluent of the Rio del Norte, have a hilly and broken surface; the hills seem to form ranges, running parallel to the Rio del Norte, and connecting the Bolson de Mapimi with the mountains north of Monterey. This tract appears to contain a large portion of fertile and cultivatable land. There are some silver mines near Santa Rosa. Texas, or the country between the Rio del Norte and the Sabine river, formerly belonged to this State. Horses, mules, and wool are exported to the United States.

Saltillo, the late capital, is situated at the southern extremity of the State, on an arid plain. The only carriage-road by which the plain of Chihuahua can be reached from the shores of the gulf of Mexico, passes through this place. It contains about 12,000 inhabitants, and has several good streets communicating at right angles with the Plaza, in the centre of which is a large reservoir, which supplies the town with water.

Monclova, the present capital, with 3,600 inhabitants, has some trade with the adjacent countries.

XXI.—*Chihuahua.*

The State of Chihuahua comprehends a large portion of the plain of Chihuahua, and likewise the mountain-ridge of the Sierra Madre, between 26 d. N. lat. and its northern extremity. The plain is not fertile, but it affords spacious sheep-walks, and wool is the staple article of the State. The pastures are covered with coarse grass; wheat, Indian corn, and cotton are raised on the lands along the rivers which are irrigated. The Sierra Madre abounds in silver, and contains many rich mines, such as Parral, Batopilas, Cosiquiriachi. Other mines, also said to be rich, have lately been opened in the mountainous tract which is called the Bolson of Mapimi, and which occupies the eastern districts contiguous to the State of Cohahuila. The northern district of the State and part of the Bolson de Mapimi also are still occupied by Indians, among whom the Camanches are excellent horsemen, and much dreaded by the white settlers.

Chihuahua, the capital, stands in an arid plain, on the banks of a small rivulet which falls into the Rio Conchos, about 700 miles from the city of Mexico. The houses are well built, and the streets regular. The cathedral is a very large edifice. A good aqueduct brings the water of a river, which is about eight miles distant, to the town, and is so judiciously contrived that even the highest parts of the city are supplied. The ore procured from the mines to the west, in the

Sierra Madre, is brought to Chihuahua, where the metal is extracted. The population amounts to 25,000 inhabitants.

XXII.—*New Mexico.*

The province of New Mexico, of which Santa Fe is the capital, was one of the first establishments of the Spaniards in the Mexican portion of America. By some tradition, it is related that a small band of adventurers proceeded thus far north shortly after the capture of the city of Mexico.

One of the early Spanish historians, writing of the events of 1550, mentions New Mexico as a known province, though as yet only inhabited by aborigines. But the only paper found in the archives of Santa Fe, which gives any clue to its first settlement, bears date September 21, 1595. This is a petition to establish a colony on the Rio del Norte, which we infer was carried into effect during the following spring.

The territory of New Mexico, or of Santa Fe, is situated in the north, bounding on the unsettled territory of the United States. It comprehends only the valley of the Rio del Norte, from 32 d. N. lat. to its source. It contains only two fertile tracts along the banks of the river, and these are separated by a desert, which spreads out 170 or 180 miles between 32 d. 30 m. and 35 d. N. lat. The northern and larger of these extends above 150 miles to the north of 35 d. N. lat., and the climate is very cold: it produces wheat and corn and the fruits of northern Europe; it affords a great abundance of pasture for cattle and horses. This portion is the district of Santa Fe. The southern tract of fertile land is of very moderate extent, lying between 32 d. and 32 d. 30 m. N. lat.: it is called the district of the Paso del Norte. It abounds in excellent fruit, especially grapes, which, as well as the wine made of them, are in high repute all over Mexico. Wheat and maize also are grown extensively. The inhabitants are whites, but on the mountains and deserts, which extend on both sides of the valley, there are several independent Indian tribes, which are at enmity with the settlers.

Santa Fe, the capital, is a small town, with 3,600 inhabitants. This is the first place that the caravans from St. Louis, in Missouri, come to after traversing the plains on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains. It has of late years become a great mart of trade, which is carried on by the caravans of mules and horse waggons loaded with goods of various kinds from the United States. It is 1,020 miles west of New Orleans, and 1,131 miles north of the city of Mexico.

Albuquerque is a thriving town.

Paso del Norte, the only town in the southern district, contains about 5,000 inhabitants.

XXIII.—*Occidente.*

The State of Occidente, or of Cinaloa and Sonora united, comprehends the low plain which extends, along the Pacific, from 23 deg. north latitude northward to the banks of the Rio del Fuerte, and, in addition, the whole of the hilly region which lies north of it. The former once constituted the province of Cinaloa, and the latter that of Sonora. The country along the coast is generally low and flat, with a sandy soil, which, however, yields good crops of corn and wheat when it can be irrigated. The principal products in the interior districts are wheat, Indian corn, and sugar; cochineal is collected in small quantities. The mountains contain abundance of gold and copper. South of the Rio del Fuerte, the population chiefly consists of whites, the number of Indians being inconsiderable: but to the north of the river the whites form only a small part of the population, the Indians being as fifteen to one of the white inhabitants. The most numerous tribes are the Yaquis, the Mayos, Opatas, and the Apaches.

They inhabit towns and villages of their own, separate from the whites, and are governed by their own magistrates.

Villa del Fuerte, the capital, situated on the banks of the Rio del Fuerte, contains about 4,000 inhabitants.

Guaymas, (23 d. north latitude) is the best harbour in Mexico, being protected on all sides by high hills, and capable of sheltering a large number of vessels. The water abreast of the pier is about five fathoms deep, and there are still deeper soundings farther off. The climate is healthy. The population is upwards of 3,000.

CHAPTER IV.

CLIMATE—SOIL—VEGETABLE PRODUCTIONS—ANIMALS.

C L I M A T E .

If climate were to be regulated by the mere circumstance of latitude, all the southern portion of Mexico would feel the heat of the torrid zone; whilst the internal provinces—the Californias and Texas, would enjoy a moderate temperature. But this is not the case. Climate is affected by a variety of causes, and is regulated more by elevation than by latitude. Of this truth Mexico affords a striking exemplification. The whole of the coasts possess a warm climate, adapted for West Indian productions; the temperature of the plains, elevated not more than 984 feet above the level of the sea, is about 77 deg. Fahrenheit. These regions are denominated *tierras calientes*, and produce in abundance sugar, indigo, cotton, and bannanas.

On the declivity of the table-land of Mexico, at an elevation of about 4000 feet, there reigns a perpetual soft spring temperature, which never varies more than four or five degrees Fahrenheit. The extremes of heat and cold are thus equally unknown. This region is denominated the “temperate regions,” where the mean heat for the whole year is from 68 to 70 degrees.

The third temperature is that of the table-land of Anahuac, or elevated plains of Mexico, and denominated the “cold regions.” This elevated tract, comprehending upwards of 176,000 square miles within the tropic of cancer, and whose altitude is more than 709 feet, has a mean temperature of 62 degrees. In the city of Mexico the thermometer has been known to fall several degrees below the freezing point; but this is a very rare occurrence, and the winters are usually as mild as at Naples.

The climate of what are denominated the internal provinces, especially that of New Mexico, differs essentially from that of the capital. Here severe winters succeed warm summers. The reason of this is plain. New Mexico is a long and not very wide valley, bounded on all sides except the south, by ranges of great and lofty mountains, covered with eternal snows, especially to the north of Santa Fe. In the peninsula of California the climate is generally sultry and the sky for months in the year cloudless, except a line of mist about the western horizon at evening, giving the most brilliant sunsets conceivable. The remainder of the year, the winter season, is rainy and oftentimes tempestuous, with winds that frequently assume the character of terrible tornadoes. Upper California has a most delightful climate. A dry and rainy season—continual breezes in the winter from the S. W., and in the summer from the N. W., with only 30 d. variation of climate during the twelve months.

SOIL AND VEGETABLE PRODUCTIONS.

Were the soil of Mexico watered by more frequent rains, no country cultivated by human industry could exceed it; but unfortunately, however fertile the soil, the want of water diminishes the abundance of the harvests. Only two seasons are known as far north as 23 degs., namely, the rainy and the dry season; the former commencing in June or July, and continuing till the end of September. The farmer has seldom to complain of too great humidity, and from 21 to 23 d., the rains are still less frequent, and of shorter duration. The droughts compel the inhabitants to have recourse to artificial irrigation.

The variety of indigenous Mexican productions is immense; indeed, there hardly exists a plant on the face of the globe which is not capable of being cultivated in this country. Those which are most generally cultivated may be divided into two kinds: those which serve for home consumption, and those which furnish raw materials for manufactures and commerce.

The Bananas

The banana is to all the inhabitants of the tropics what the variety of grain is to Europe, and what rice is to the inhabitants of Hindustan and China. Wherever the mean heat exceeds 75 degrees, the fruit of the banana becomes one of the most important objects of cultivation for human subsistence.

Maize, or Indian Corn.

Maize is the principal food of the Mexicans. When the maize harvest is poor, either from want of rain or premature frost, famine is general; but of all the gramina sown, none is so unequal in its produce as maize. The price of maize varies from fifty cents to four dollars the hundred pounds. In a country where there are no magazines, and where the inhabitants live merely from hand to mouth, the people suffer terribly when there is a short crop of Indian corn; they then feed on unripe fruits, berries and roots.

Wheat.

Of European Cerealia, wheat holds the first rank in Mexico, and was introduced by a negro slave of Cortes, who found three or four grains of it among the rice that was served to maintain the Spanish army. These grains were sown before the year 1530. The wheat harvests are rich in proportion to the quantity of water procured from the rivers by means of irrigating canals. In lands thus artificially cultivated, the produce of wheat is astonishing. Humboldt gives 25 bushels to one as the annual produce of the whole average crop of Mexico; but when irrigation is properly conducted, and the year is good, from 60 to 80 bushels for one have been frequently produced; yet, notwithstanding this astonishing productiveness, wheat in Mexico is considerably dearer than it is in the English market.

Potatoes.

The potatoe, though a native of Mexico, was not known there at the time of Montezuma. It is much cultivated in the highest part of the central land, and is admirably adapted for these elevated and dry regions. The Mexicans, like the Peruvians, preserve their potatoes for whole years by drying them in the sun. They grow to an enormous size, often to more than twelve inches in diameter.

Other Vegetables.

All the garden stuffs of Europe are now cultivated in Mexico in addition to those peculiar to the climate. Orange and citron trees flourish vigorously in the central regions; olive groves are numerous; the cultivation of grapes is most successfully prosecuted in some districts, where large quantities of wine are made. The figs of Lower California form a considerable article of export to the other states of the Republic; and the dates which grow there are much esteemed. Lemons pomegranates, quinces, and pine-apples, abound in Sonora, and other districts. The most important beverage of the Mexican Indians, is the juice of the *Agave*, a plant which is extensively cultivated there. This plant, which is scarcely five feet in height, yields a honey-like juice at the time of the effervescence of the plant. At this period, an incision is made, from which a juice exudes, which continues running for three months. This juice ferments in three or four days, and is then called *pulque*; the liquor resembles cider in taste, and is esteemed an excellent and nutritive drink. The consumption of this liquor is immense. A very intoxicating brandy called *mesical*, is formed from the pulque. The agave shrub also supplies the place of the hemp of Asia, and the papyrus of Egypt, as all the Mexican manuscripts sent to Europe are written on paper made of the fibres of agave leaves.

Sugar.

The cultivation of sugar has made rapid progress in Mexico within the present century. "The possibility," says Ward, "of cultivating a sugar cane beneath the tropics by a system of free labour, has often been canvassed; but I know no country except Mexico where the experiment has been fairly tried upon a large scale. The plantations were all worked, in the first instance, by slaves who were purchased at from three to four hundred dollars each. The difficulty of ensuring a sufficient supply during a war with a maritime nation, and the number of slaves who perished from the sudden change of climate on the road to the coast, induced several of the great proprietors to endeavour to propagate a race of free labourers, by giving liberty to a certain number of slaves annually, and encouraging them to intermarry with the native Indians, which they soon did to a very great extent. The plan was found to be so economical, that on many of the large estates there was not a single slave in 1808. Such is the fertility of equinoctial Mexico, that Humboldt estimated that all the sugar consumed in France, say 44,140,000 pounds, might be produced on a surface of 55 square miles. As it is, the greatest part of the sugar is consumed in Mexico itself. The crop is estimated at about 50,000,000 pounds.

Cotton.

Although the soil is highly favourable to the cultivation of cotton, yet the quantity cultivated is comparatively small. Cotton of the finest quality is cultivated all along the coast from Acapulco to Guatamala, but two circumstances operate as obstacles to the cultivation: the want of machines, and the high price of carriage. The Eastern coast might supply the commerce of Vera Cruz with an enormous quantity of cotton, were it occupied by a people of energetic and industrious habits. The quantity exported to Europe in 1830, was less than 1,000,000 pounds.

Coffee, Chocolate, &c.

The cultivation of coffee is almost unknown in Mexico, the quantity consumed not exceeding 500 quintals annually. The cultivation of the cocoa-tree

is now much more neglected in Mexico than at the time of its conquest. At that time the Mexicans prepared a beverage called choclatt, whence the modern term chocolate is derived. All the vanilla used in Europe, comes from Mexico by way of Vera Cruz, and is produced on a surface of a few square leagues of ground in the intendencies of Vera Cruz and Oaxaca; the annual exports amount to about \$10,000. Sarsaparilla is also produced on the same eastern slope where the vanilla is produced. The quantities of red-pepper raised in all parts of the country is almost incredible. The Mexican would rather go without bread, than lack *chili*, as he calls it, with his meat. Both in its green and dried state the amount consumed is incredible. When mashed and mixed with a little water, it is the universal sauce on the tables of the great, while with the poor it forms a component part of their diet. The famous medicinal purgative called *Jalap*, from Xalapa, in the vicinity of which it is cultivated, vegetates at an absolute height of from 4 to 5000 feet on the whole mountainous slope. The whole annual quantity of what is exported from Vera Cruz is about 5000 pounds, or more than one half of what is consumed in Europe.

Tobacco, &c.

Tobacco grows luxuriantly throughout large districts in Mexico, and the quantity consumed there is enormous, although the Indian population make no use whatever of this noxious weed. The cultivation of indigo is much neglected in Mexico, although there are great opportunities for its cultivation.

Animals.

With the exception of the cochineal insect, the most valuable animals known in Mexico have been introduced by Europeans. The Mexicans have not even reduced to a domestic state the two species of wild oxen, which wander in immense herds near the plains of the Rio del Norte; they were unacquainted with the lama of the Cordilleras; and made no use of the wild sheep of California, or of the wild goats of Upper California. Since the conquest, the domestic animals imported from Europe, as oxen, sheep, horses, and hogs, have multiplied amazingly. Immense numbers of horned cattle feed on the ever-verdant pastures of the coast. The natives, like the Chinese, care very little for milk, butter or cheese, but the two latter are in much request among the castes of mixed extraction.

The horses of the northern provinces are as celebrated for their excellent qualities as those of Chili; both said to be of Arabian extraction. Many Mexican families possess from 30,000 to 40,000 head of horses and cattle. The mules would be still more numerous, if so many of them did not perish on the highways from over labour. The commerce of Vera Cruz alone employs 70,000 mules and 5000 are employed in the carriages of the city of Mexico.

The rearing of sheep has been dreadfully neglected in Mexico. None of the merinos have been introduced.

Of wild animals peculiar to Mexico, the gigantic stags of Upper California are the chief. All the forests and plains are filled with droves of this animal, which is justly affirmed by every traveller to be the most beautiful quadruped of America, and is quite different from the elk of the United States. They are of a brown colour, smooth and without spot. Their antlers, of which the branches are not flat, are four and a half feet long; some have been seen whose branches were nine feet long. No horses are capable of outrunning them. The other wild animals are the tapir, which is extremely fierce and voracious, and whose skin will resist a musket-ball; great numbers of monkeys, bears, wolves, foxes, and wild cats; all these, except the tapir, are common to both continents. The

jaguar is met with in the lower part of Mexico. Of the hog, there are only two varieties in Mexico, the one introduced from Europe, and the other from the Phillippine Islands. They have multiplied amazingly on the table lands, and in some parts an extensive commerce is carried on in bacon.

Birds.

The feathered tribes are so numerous, and of such various appearances, that Mexico has been called the country of birds as Africa is of quadrupeds. Ornithologists describe more than 200 species of birds as peculiar to Mexico. Aquatic birds are very numerous, and of great velocity. There are, at least, twenty species of ducks, and vast numbers of geese. Mexico has furnished Europe with the largest of domestic birds, the turkey, which is found wild on the banks of the Cordilleras, from the Isthmus of Panama to Canada.

Insects.

As wax is an object of great importance in a Catholic country, the rearing of bees has been always a principal concern. Bee-hives are extremely productive in the province of Yucatan. The rearing of the cochineal insect is of great antiquity in Mexico, but was formerly more general than now. It seems to thrive only between the tropics, and there at an elevation of 5000 feet above the sea. In the intendency of Oaxaca alone there is annually exported upwards of 100,000 pounds weight. The attending this insect forms the chief occupation of a large part of the Indian population.

Fisheries.

The Mexican fisheries are of no importance. The pearl fisheries of California were much more productive anciently than now; but they have been long since abandoned. The western coasts of Mexico abound with spermaceti whales, but the fishery is almost entirely in the hands of the Americans.

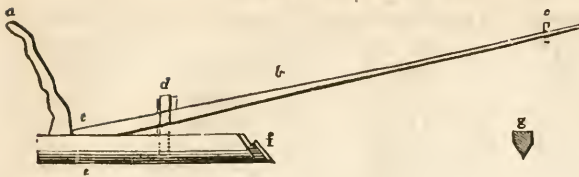
CHAPTER V.

AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES AND COMMERCE.

AGRICULTURE.

OF the agriculture of Mexico, very little can be said. They have cultivated almost every thing, more than their soil, hence they have no system of agriculture. The plough in universal use, is the same that was used two thousand years ago, and is simply a wooden wedge, sometimes without a particle of iron. The hoe is a wooden staff, with an iron spike in the end; the only animal used in ploughing, is the ox, although the planter may have thousands of horses and mules. The grains chiefly cultivated are wheat, barley, and Indian corn. Rye and oats are not cultivated at all, or at least, very little, and many travellers have asserted that they have never seen either in any part of Mexico. Barley is the only grain used as food for horses, and wheat straw is the fodder. Wheat is used for bread by the better classes, whilst Indian meal forms the only bread used by the masses; yet, notwithstanding this, there is not, up to this hour, a corn-mill in all Mexico; but as a substitute, the corn is soaked in water, and is then ground on a smooth stone with a long roller, made also of stone.

MEXICAN PLOUGH.



(a) The handle; (b) the beam to which the oxen are attached; (c) pin by which the beam is attached to the yoke; (d) wedges, &c., by which the beam is elevated or lowered, as occasion requires; (e) the main-piece or sole; (f) the shoe affixed to the main-piece—this is made of iron, and is the only part of the plough composed of that material; (g) section of the sole.

The cultivation of the *maguey alse*, or *Argave Americana*, is conducted with great profit, and there are, throughout the country, vast plantations of it. This plant is one of the most useful in Mexico. It makes an excellent fence while growing. After it arrives at perfection, which is usually about seven years, *pulque* (a beverage in common use) is extracted from its stalk; the leaves are then either cut up as food for animals, or are manufactured into rope, twine, coarse Indian cloth, or wrapping paper of unequalled toughness.

The importation of raw cotton is positively prohibited; in consequence of which many persons have been induced to commence plantations; but it is doubtful whether the agricultural habits of the people will permit them to flourish.

Hitherto the cotton crop of this republic has not greatly exceeded in value the sum of \$1,750,000. Its value is quite variable. At Tepic, on the west coast, it has been as low as \$15 per quintal; at Vera Cruz, on the east coast, \$22 and \$34; while at Puebla, and in the capital, it has risen to \$40 and even \$48.

The culture of silk is just beginning to attract attention. A company has just been formed for operating upon a large scale, and have sent an agent to France as preliminary to that object. Mexico would be a glorious country for the silkworm, and the business could not fail to be profitable. The *Morus Multicaulis* would supply food for the worm, at least ten months in the year, so that three or four crops could be raised annually.

MANUFACTURES.

The Government of Mexico has steadily persevered in fostering her domestic manufactures, despite the efforts of foreign capitalists. The administration of Santa Anna was very energetic in protecting the manufacturing interest, both by a high tariff, and by his efforts to suppress the smuggling of English and American fabrics. Such, however, has been the uniform policy of every administration, so that the manufacturers regard their establishments as perfectly safe, and their future success as certain: the manufacturers have already outstripped the production of the cotton planters of Mexico, but notwithstanding this, the importation of the raw material is prohibited. In 1842, some foreign merchants induced the President to consent to the admission, on more favourable terms, of coarse cotton goods; but the united opposition of the manufacturers defeated the arrangement.

Cotton goods which sell in the United States for six cents per yard, are worth thirty cents in Mexico. This results from the high price of the raw material, which sells at from forty to fifty cents per pound, and from the circumstance that all the machinery is imported and transported by land at an enormous cost; and also to the difficulty and delay of repairing it, when it gets out of order. The annexed table, obtained from the most authentic sources, by Mr. MAYER, exhibits the number of manufactories, &c., in each Department, in 1843.

STATISTICS OF MEXICAN FACTORIES.

No. of Factories in each department.	Spindles established.	Spindles in erection.	Total.
In Mexico, - 12	- 30,156	- - -	30,156
In Puebla, - 21	- 35,672	- 12,240	47,912
In Vera Cruz, 7	- 17,860	- 5,200	23,060
In Guadaluaxara, 5	- 11,312	- 6,500	17,812
In Queretara, - 2	- 7,620	- - -	7,620
In Durango, - 4	- 2,520	- - -	2,520
In Guanajuato, 1	- 1,200	- - -	1,200
In Sonora, - 1	- 1,000	- - -	1,000
53	107,340	23,940	131,280

It must be remarked that there are *three* manufacturing establishments in Durango, the number of spindles in which are included in the above table, because no definite information concerning them had been received. They may, however, be calculated at about 4000, which, added to the 131,280, will give a grand total of at least 135,000. The number of looms also in the republic is not presented, because *data* have been furnished only in relation to those moved by machinery. An immense number of *hand-loom*s are in constant operation throughout the republic.

The value of the Mexican manufacturing establishments may be stated, in round numbers, at \$10,000,000. The number of persons employed in every way in manufactories, cannot be short of 30,000.

There are two paper factories near the capital; one at Puebla, and one in Guadaluaxara. Their productions are said to be very good, but by no means adequate to the consumption of the country: immense quantities of paper is used in the manufacture of segars.

Glass factories are numerous in Mexico and Puebla, where large quantities of window glass and common tumblers are made. Their produce, however, is not sufficient for the wants of the country.

Woollen blankets, and coarse woollen cloths are also manufactured in Mexico.

There are several manufactories of cotton balls, or thread, in Mexico, but they are not of much importance.

The manufacture of tobacco and gunpowder occupy a considerable number of persons; but the Government has reserved to itself these branches of industry, which it finds an abundant source of revenue.

Soap is very extensively manufactured, and the country possesses great advantage for this business. Tallow is very cheap, owing to the great number of cattle. The carbonate of soda abounds on the table-land of Anahuac, and in the plain of Chihuahua, as well as in many other places. Soap is made not only in the large established manufactories in Mexico, Puebla, and Guadaluaxara, but also in many other places. Even from the poor and thinly inhabited country of Lower California, soap forms one of the most important articles of export.

The power made use of for the movement of the factories, is water, which is abundant for that purpose all over the country, proceeding from small streams, falling from the mountains into the neighbouring plains.

COMMERCE.

A nation engaged in the pursuits of war, whether foreign or domestic, soon loses its relish for the cultivation of the peaceful arts: Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce, and all other industrial pursuits of the country, which are

essential to its greatness and power, are sacrificed upon the altar of blood. Such is the condition of Mexico; her continual revolutionary disturbances have decreased the wealth of the people—involving them in pecuniary embarrassments—arrested the business pursuits of the enterprising, and turned the public mind into a channel adverse to the occupations of peace: it is not surprising, therefore, that Mexico has but little commerce.

In 1832 and 1833, the Custom House receipts amounted to about twelve millions of dollars per annum. In 1839, on account of the French blockade, they fell to near three millions; in 1840 they rose again to seven millions, and in 1841 they fell to about five, which sum may be divided among the different ports as follows, to wit:—

Vera Cruz	- - - - -	\$3,329,802
Tampico	- - - - -	883,039
Matamoras	- - - - -	312,403
Guyamas	- - - - -	55,814
Monterey	- - - - -	96,853
Acapulco	- - - - -	17,182
San Blas	- - - - -	208,845
	<i>Total amount</i> - - - - -	7,703,938
Total	- - - - -	\$5,287,097 <i>wrongly added</i>

This corresponds to about twelve millions three hundred thousand dollars of importation annually, divided (according to an estimate) in the following manner:—

From England	- - - - -	\$4,500,000
“ France	- - - - -	3,000,000
“ Hamburg	- - - - -	1,500,000
“ China	- - - - -	1,000,000
“ United States	- - - - -	800,000
“ Spain	- - - - -	500,000
“ Genoa and other ports	- - - - -	1,000,000
Total	- - - - -	\$12,300,000

The expense to the government for the collection of this revenue, was \$148,290.

The Exports from the Republic, chiefly its own productions, may be rated at—

Specie, through Vera Cruz	- - - - -	\$4,000,000
do do Mazatlan and San Blas	- - - - -	3,500,000
Silver and gold through other ports,	- - - - -	5,000,000
Silver through Tampico	- - - - -	7,000,000
Cochineal, Jalap, Vanilla, Sarsaparilla and Hides	- - - - -	1,000,000
Sundries	- - - - -	500,000
Total	- - - - -	\$20,000,000 <i>wrong.</i>

From these tables it appears that the whole export from Mexico in 1842 amounted to \$20,000,000, of which the gold and silver amounted to \$18,500,000, which leaves a balance of other products of only \$1,500,000, which is all that can be fairly set down as the result of Mexican industry, the precious metals being produced by foreign enterprise almost entirely.

Commerce of the different Ports.

Vera Cruz.—From the 1st of January to the 1st of July, 1842, there were 102 arrivals at Vera Cruz, and 169 departures, of which 19 were American and 26 English, 20 Mexican and 13 French.

Tampico.—During the year ending 31st December, 1841, there were 91 arrivals and departures at Tampico, of which 19 were British men-of-war and packets, 9 British merchantmen, 24 American, and 18 Mexican.

Matamoras.—In 1841, the whole trade of this port was carried on in vessels from the United States, 32 in number. The exports consisted of:—

Specie	- - - - -	\$352,766
Hides	- - - - -	117,334
Wool	- - - - -	15,943
Horses and Mules	- - - - -	800
Total	- - - - -	\$486,843

The imports from the United States amounted to \$426,945, and of the following articles:—Silks valued at \$3,350; Woollens, do \$29,194; Cottons, do \$205,451; Linens, do \$71,312; Hardware and Machinery, do \$19,311; Paper, do \$1,680; Jewelry, do \$452; and sundries, amounting in value to \$96,165.

Santa Fé Trade.

The overland trade between the United States and the northern provinces of Mexico, and more especially with Santa Fé, commenced about the year 1804; its origin having been rather the result of accident than of any organized plan. It appears that a man of the name of James Pursley, after wandering over the wild and unexplored regions west of the Mississippi, finally fell in with some Indians on the Platte river, near its source in the Rocky Mountains; from them he obtained information respecting the settlements in New Mexico, and finally set out with a party of these savages for Santa Fé, which he reached in 1805, where he remained until his death. He is supposed to have been the first *American* that ever crossed the desert plains into the Spanish provinces. It is said, however, that a merchant of Kaskaskia, named Morrison, had obtained some information of the trappers, in relation to Santa Fé, and that as early as 1804, he had dispatched a French Creole up the Platte river, with directions to push his way into Santa Fé. He was successful in his enterprise, but he never returned to his employer, or accounted to him for the proceeds of his adventure, but with the capital thus acquired he set up business for himself, raised a large family, and after some twenty years died a very wealthy man.

In 1806, Capt. Pike, who was afterwards promoted to the rank of General, and died in the achievement of the glorious victory at York, Upper Canada, in 1813, was sent, in 1806, on an exploring expedition up the Arkansas. He finally, after much suffering, descended upon the Rio del Norte, with his party, then but fifteen in number; and believing himself within the bounds of the United States, erected a small fortification for his company, until the opening of the spring of 1807 should enable him to continue his way to Natchitoches. As he was in the Mexican settlements, he was discovered, and a force sent to take him to Santa Fé, which was accomplished by treachery. His papers were seized, and he and his party were sent under an escort to the United States.

Upon his return he published a narrative, in which he gave the most glowing descriptions of this new region. His narrative created great excitement in the western country; and in 1812, a regular expedition was fitted out under the auspices of Messrs. McKnight, Beard, Chambers, and others, who, following the

directions of Capt. Pike, finally reached Santa Fé in safety; but they were destined to experience severe disappointments and trials. A revolution had just taken place, and they were seized as spies, their goods confiscated, and themselves thrown into prison, where they remained for nine years, when another revolution placed Iturbide in the ascendant, and they were released.

In 1821, two other expeditions set out, and not only reached Santa Fé, but their homes in safety, after having realized a very handsome profit on their adventure. This stimulated others, and from the year 1822, we may date the virtual commencement of the Santa Fé trade. At the present time, the intercourse is conducted on a systematic plan, a large capital being invested in the trade. As the route leads over a vast desert, where the traveller is exposed to the depredations of roving savages, those engaged in this trade find it necessary to unite their forces, and to travel in large companies, like the caravans of the East, well provided with the means of defence. Their goods are transported in covered waggons drawn by horses, or on the backs of mules, and usually consist of a great variety of merchandize for the supply of the Mexican markets, such as cotton and woollen stuffs, tobacco, spirits, jewelry, &c., for which returns are made in specie and bullion.

The caravans generally take their departure from the town of Independence, on the Missouri river, 379 miles above St. Louis, and on the western borders of the state of Missouri. The length of the route from that place is 877 miles, and the time consumed by the journey is from two to three months.

The Santa Fé trade, though more or less fluctuating from its origin, continued to present an average increase down to 1831. During the same period the price of goods continued to go down in a more rapid ratio. Since 1831, the sales have continued steadily to fall, to the latest period of the trade. Medium calicoes average about 37 1-2 cents, and plain domestic cottons 31 cents per yard. 100 per cent upon United States cost is now considered as yielding excellent profits, which generally leave a net profit of 30 or 40 per cent.

In 1822, the amount of merchandize sent to Santa Fé was estimated at \$15,000, and it gradually increased up to 1843, when it amounted to \$450,000.

The following estimate for the year 1846, was made by Mr. David Waldo, an energetic merchant, who has been for twenty years engaged in the overland trade:—

The trade to Santa Fe, this year, will be 175 large mule waggons, 1,700 mules, 500 men, 200 large ox waggons, 2,000 oxen, 1,000 yokes.

Value of goods (first cost)	- - - - -	\$937,500
Do waggons	- - - - -	75,000
Do 1,750 mules	- - - - -	70,000
Do 1,000 yoke of oxen	- - - - -	35,000
Hire of 500 men for the trip	- - - - -	75,000
Expenses of freight, insurance, &c., to Independence (10 per cent)	- - - - -	93,750
Harness &c., for 2,000 mules and horses	- - - - -	15,000
Provisions—bacon, flour, &c., on the trip out—		
550 men, at \$20 each	- - - - -	11,000
Small outfit	- - - - -	50,000
		1,362,250

The return for this is exclusively bullion.

The net profits will be - - - - - 400,000

Total - - - - - \$1,652,250

The Indian trade, exclusive of the Missouri river, employs about 200 men, at \$200 a year each	\$40,000
Capital invested,	300,000
Oxen, mules, waggons, &c.	30,000
Total	\$370,000

N. B. This does not include the numerous outfits and parties from Arkansas and Texas, nor any of the extensive trade among the civilized and located Indians.

To Oregon, this year, I estimate there will be—

500 waggons, value	\$50,000
1,500 yoke of oxen	45,000
5,000 loose cattle, at \$5	25,000
Mules and horses	10,000
Outfit, provisions, &c.	25,000
Total	\$155,000

25,000 persons.

To California much the same as to Oregon, but one quarter less—\$116,250.
1000 persons.

Grand total of Property.

Mexican trail	\$1,752,250
Indian country,	390,000
Oregon	155,000
California	116,700
Total	\$2,413,950

In this I make no mention of the arms, equipments, money, and personal effects of the great number of persons, emigrants, travellers, and others passing across the plains. These added to the above, will swell the amount beyond \$3,000,000. The number of persons of all kinds who will pass out through the Indian country will exceed 5,000.

Remember that these statements refer exclusively to the country and trade carried on within it, which is beyond the military establishments of the frontier, and out of the beat of the troops. Self-protection is all that we have to rely upon for the safety of our lives and property.

CHAPTER VI.

MINES AND MINERALS.

The Mineral wealth of Mexico is very great; her mountains contain almost every mineral in use in agriculture, manufacture and the fine arts. But the mines of iron and lead have been almost wholly neglected, while those of silver and gold have been sedulously wrought. Copper is found in considerable quantities, and tin is abundant; extensive iron mines exist in the internal provinces, but coal is very rare. Among the precious stones a few diamonds are found, with amethysts, and turquoises. The mountains produce jasper, marble, alabaster,

magnets, steatite, jade, quicksilver and talc; but it is the mines of silver and gold which constitute the chief wealth of this country. It is not known at what period the mines of Mexico began to be worked, or were first discovered. It is well known, however, that the natives did not content themselves with those minerals which they found in their native state, on the surface of the earth, and particularly in the beds of rivers and ravines formed by torrents,—but applied themselves to subterraneous operations in working veins, cutting galleries, and digging pits, of communication and ventilation, and that they possessed instruments adapted for cutting rocks.

All the Mexican mines are situated between the extreme points of 14 d. and 36 d. N. lat., none having as yet been discovered to the south or north of these latitudes. Within this space are contained about 350 *reals*, or places celebrated for mines in their vicinity; and the number of mines comprehended in these *reals* is nearly *three thousand*. In 1804, about 500 of these mines were worked in different places.

Under the old regime, the mines were divided into 37 districts, over which were placed the same number of councils, called *Diputaciones de Minería*. The following table exhibits a view of the mining districts and *reals* in Mexico, according to Humboldt:—

<i>Intendencias.</i>	<i>Districts.</i>	<i>Reals.</i>
1. Guanaxuato	1	19
2. Zacatecas	4	14
3. San Louis Potosi	5	28
4. Mexico	7	60
5. Guadalajara	3	44
6. Durango	5	61
7. Sonora	7	68
8. Valladolid	4	27
9. Oaxaca	1	17
—	—	118 390
9	37	337

In the intendencias of Puebla, Vera Cruz and Old California, there were no *Diputaciones*, as in other intendencias; but the number of *reals* amounted to 12, making a grand total of 349.

The mines of Mexico are geologically divided by Humboldt into eight groups, almost all placed either on the ridge, or on the western side of the Cordillera of Anahuac, the whole forming a surface of 12,000 square leagues, or 100,000 British square miles. These groups are not to be considered as forming one connected and continuous surface, but as so many distinct localities, with vast tracts of intervening spaces, almost totally destitute of metalliferous veins. Of these eight groups, that which contains, within a surface of 16,000 square miles, the mines of Guanaxuato, Zacatecas, and Catorce, is by far the richest, and when Humboldt wrote, supplied more than one half of the metallic produce of New Spain. The principal rocks which at present furnish almost all the silver of Mexico, are porphyritic, reposing on beds of primitive slate, grey-wacke and Alpine lime-stone. The most celebrated mines are situated at absolute heights of from 5904 to 9842 feet above the sea.

Mines of Guanaxuato.

These are the richest mines now known in Mexico. They were discovered in the middle of the sixteenth century, and have alone produced to the amount of about \$300,000,000; and from 1786 to 1803, a period of eighteen years, the annual average was \$4,731,624, which is six and a half times more

than the annual product of all the veins of Hungary and Transylvania put together. The mine of *Valencia*, in Guanaxuato, originally belonged to two individuals, namely, the Count de Valenciana and M. Otero. It was not worked till 1760, and then by a solitary adventurer. In 1776 the works were already 262 feet in depth, and the expenses greatly exceeded the value of its produce. In 1768 it began to pay, in proportion as the pit grew deeper. From 1771 to 1804, this mine never yielded less than \$2,900,000 annually to the two proprietors, and in some years the profits, clear of all expenses, amounted to \$1,200,000. This mine is now wrought to the depth of 1685 feet.

Mines of Zacatecas.

The value of the annual produce of the mines of Zacatecas is about \$3,000,000. The mines of *Sombresete*, in this intendency, are celebrated for the immense riches of their veins, which in the space of a few months left to the family of Fagoago a net profit of *four millions* of dollars.

Mines of Catorce.

These mines, in the state of San Louis Potosi, are at present the richest in Mexico, except those of Guanaxuato. They were discovered in 1778. Several of them were discovered in 1773 by two poor individuals, and begun to be wrought, but the produce was small and variable. In 1778, a Spanish miner named Zepeda, examined for three months this mountainous district, and finally found the surface of the great vein, on which he immediately dug the pit of Guadalupe. He drew from it an immense quantity of muriatic silver and colorados mixed with native gold, and gained, in a short time, more than \$500,000. From that time it was vigorously wrought. The famous mine of *Purissima*, has almost constantly yielded since 1783, a net annual profit of \$200,000, and its produce in 1796 amounted to \$1,200,000, while the expenses of working only amounted to \$80,000. Since 1802 these rich mines have been filled with water.

Mines of Pachuca.

These mines are famed for their antiquity, wealth and proximity to the capital. Terrible fires have occurred in some of them, which caused them to be wholly abandoned.

Biscaina Vein.

This vein, though not so extensive as that of Guanaxuato, is perhaps still richer, and was successfully wrought from the 16th to the beginning of the 18th century. In 1726 and 1727 the two mines of *Biscaina* and *Xacol* still produced together 356,182 lbs. troy of silver,—valued at \$4,672,950. The mining operations, however, were abandoned from the great quantity of water, and the ignorance of the methods of drawing it off; instead of using pumps, they drew up the water in *bags* suspended to ropes.

Mines of Zimapan.

The produce of these mines, and of the others in the intendency of Mexico, is valued at \$1,120,000 annually.

Mines of Durango.

The mineral district of Durango yields annually silver to the amount of \$3,825,000. The groups of *Chihuahua*, and *Oaxaca*, are estimated to produce annually, \$1,115,000. In the vicinity of Chihuahua, according to Pike, are thirteen silver mines, one of gold, and one of copper; and at *Maiepernie*, seven silver mines and one gold mine.

Baron Humboldt gives the gross produce of the mines of Mexico, from 1690 to 1806, both years inclusive, as amounting to \$1,429,361,717, averaging about \$12,216,766 per annum. The highest amount, which was in the year 1796, was \$25,644,566. The produce of the year 1804 he states at \$24,000,000. Mr. Ward estimates the annual produce for a few years prior to 1810, at \$24,000,000. After that period, in consequence of the revolutionary condition of the country, it dwindled to almost nothing—in one year to three and a half millions of dollars.

Hon. Waddy Thompson says, that “the official returns for the year 1842 exhibit an exportation of gold and silver as registered in the Custom Houses, amounting to \$18,500,000. The facilities with which large values of gold may be concealed, and thus clandestinely exported, and the temptation to do so from the high duty of six per cent. on exportation, caused a very large amount to be smuggled. That this was extensively practised was known to every one in Mexico. To form any accurate estimate of the amount of the exports of specie, a very large addition must be made on this account. Three or four millions would scarcely cover it. Add to these the amount retained in the country, and it will be very safe to assume the present produce of the mines at from twenty-two to twenty-four millions of dollars per annum.

“The whole amount coined at the mint in the city of Mexico, since the Conquest, is \$443,000,000 ; since 1690, \$295,968,750.”

The produce of the mines of Mexico, (says Mr. Thompson) “is quite as large, or larger, now than at any other period, taking an average of ten years, but not so profitable to the proprietors, owing to the immense investments in machinery, and the greater labour of raising the ores now compared with the rude and unexpensive machinery hitherto used, and the comparatively small labour of taking out the ores. The company, which now owns the great mine of Real del Monte, have, in the last few years, expended in machinery and other ways, several millions of dollars. The shaft of that mine is nearly a thousand yards deep.

“Not one fiftieth of the mines are worked, which is attributed, in a great degree, to the high price of quicksilver. This is caused by the monopoly, by the Rothschilds, of the quicksilver mines of Spain, from which the article is chiefly supplied.

The silver extracted in the thirty-seven districts of mines was deposited in the provincial treasuries of the intendencies ; and it is from these receipts that we must judge of the quantity of silver furnished by the different mines. From 1785 to 1789, there were received in the deposits of eleven provincial treasuries, the following quantities of silver, valuing the marks at 8 1-2 dollars :—

	<i>Marks.</i>	<i>Dollars.</i>
Guanaxuato - - -	2,469,000	20,986,500
San Louis Potosi - - -	1,515,000	12,877,500
Zacatecas - - -	1,205,000	10,242,500
Mexico - - -	1,055,000	8,967,500
Durango - - -	922,000	7,835,778
Rosario - - -	668,000	5,678,000
Guadalajara - - -	509,000	4,326,500
Pachuca - - -	455,000	3,867,000
Bolanos - - -	364,000	3,094,000
Sombreste - - -	320,000	2,720,000
Zimapan - - -	218,000	2,108,000
Total - - -	9,780,000	82,703,000

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Gold Mines.

The Mexican gold is, for the most part, obtained from alluvial grounds, by means of washing. These grounds are common in the State of Sonora. In the plain of Cineguilla, grains of gold of such a size were found at the depth of nineteen inches from the surface, that some of them weighed nine marks each, equivalent in value to more than \$1000. In several other places large pieces of gold have been found. Gold is also found in the veins which intersect the mountains of primitive rock. These veins have been found a foot and a half thick. This metal is also found either pure or mixed with silver ore, and there is scarcely a silver mine in Mexico which does not contain some gold. The principal vein in the mine of Villalpando, is intersected by a great number of small *rotten* veins of exceeding richness. The argillaceous, or clayey slime, with which these veins are filled, contain so great a quantity of gold, disseminated in impalpable parcels, that the miners are compelled, when they leave the mine nearly naked, to bathe themselves in large vessels to prevent any of the auriferous clay from being carried off by them on their bodies.

Inferior Minerals.

Having given a brief account of the precious metals, we will now notice some of the more common metals. Copper is found in a native state, and in great abundance in the mines of Ingora, and at San Juan Guetamo, in the province of New Mexico. The intendency of Guanaxuato produced in 1802 about 230,000 lbs. of copper, and 10,000 lbs. of tin. Tin is also abundant in the internal provinces, where a number of valuable mines of this mineral are situated, in the vicinity of Durango. The iron mines are very abundant, in Valladolid, Zacatecas and Guanaxuato, but especially in the internal provinces. Lead abounds in the calcareous mountains, especially in the district of Zimapan, and in the province of Santander. Zinc, Antimony, and Arsenic, are also found in abundance. About 100 miles south of Chihuahua, an entire mountain of loadstone, or magnetic iron, has been lately discovered. The strata are as regular as those of limestone.

In 1821 and 1822, the Mexicans determined to restore their mines to their former importance, but to that end, fresh capitalists were necessary, and to secure them, an Act of Congress threw the door open to foreigners, who were allowed to become joint proprietors with natives, on terms highly favourable to the adventurers. This Act, as favourable to foreign speculation, was eagerly taken advantage of by British capitalists, and for a time there was a general *mining* mania in England; a large number of companies were formed, but up to 1827 there were only seven great English companies, besides one German and two American companies employed in working mines in different parts of the country. These companies were as follows:—

The Real del Monte Co.—Capital, \$4,000,000—all invested. Mines located in the states of Mexico, Zimapan and Valladolid. Hon. Waddy Thompson says that this company have within a few years past, expended in machinery and in other ways, several millions of dollars. The shaft of the Real del Monte mine is nearly a thousand yards deep.

Bolanos Company.—Capital, \$200,000. Mines located in Guadalajara and Zacatecas.

Tlalpujahuá Company.—Capital, \$2,000,000. Mines located in Mexico and Valladolid.

Anglo-Mexican Company.—Capital, \$5,000,000. Mines located in Guanajuato, Lueretaro, San Louis Potosi, and in two districts in Mexico.

United Mexican Co.—Capital, \$6,000,000. Mines in Guanajuato, Guadalajara, Zacatecas, Chihuahua, Oaxaca, and a large number in Mexico.

Mexican Co.—Capital not known. Mines located, Vera Cruz, Zacatecas and Oaxaca.

Catorce Co.—Capital unknown, some \$300,000 invested. Mines in Mexico, Queretaro, and San Louis Potosi.

German Co. of Eberfeld.—Capital unknown; \$637,760 invested. All their mines are in the State of Mexico.

New York Co.—Capital unknown—investment small. They had a small number of mines in Mexico.

Baltimore Co.—Capital unknown—a few mines in Mexico. Director, Mr. KEATING.

Method of working the Mines.

Mr. Poinsett, who visited the mines of Guanajuato in 1823, gives the following interesting account of their appearance, and the method of working them :

“ The excavations extend from south-east to north-west, 1600 yards, and 800 yards in a south-west direction. There are three parallels or plains, worked on ramifications of the principal vein. The *veta madre*, or mother vein, was here found, not more than 22 feet wide, and without any ramification from the surface of the soil, to the depth of 557 feet; at this depth, it divided into three branches, and the entire mass, from 165 to to 195 feet thick; of these three branches, not more than one is in general very productive.

“ They have all the same angle, (45 d.,) but vary in thickness from nine to forty yards. Four shafts descend to these parallels, the first called San Antonio, of 744 feet perpendicular depth—the cost of this shaft was \$396,000. The square shaft of Santo Christo, 492 feet deep, cost \$95,000. The hexagon shaft of our Lady of Guadeloupe, 1131 feet perpendicular depth, cost \$700,000. San José, an octagon shaft, of more than 1800 perpendicular depth, and 300 feet in the direction of the *veta madre*, which is an angle of 45 d., cost \$1,200,000.

“ To understand the necessity of sinking so many shafts of different depths, it may be necessary to explain, that in following the dip of the vein, which is first discovered on the surface, and is almost invariably an angle of 45 d., the work is impeded after a certain depth by water. A shaft is then sunk, so as to intercept the vein at the termination of the gallery, in order to free the mine from water. The work is then continued until it becomes necessary to sink another shaft still deeper, to clear the lower galleries. At the termination of each shaft a great many parallel galleries branch out on ramifications of the mother vein.

“ From these parallels a vast number of smaller galleries branch out, worked to a greater or less distance, as the ore proved to be of good or bad quality; and many of them were pierced with a view of discovering other veins. Besides the shafts, there are two descents by steps, winding down to the last parallel. On leaving the house of the administrador, we were conducted to the first flight of steps; and preceded by four men carrying torches, we descended to the first parallel, and stopped where four galleries branch off.

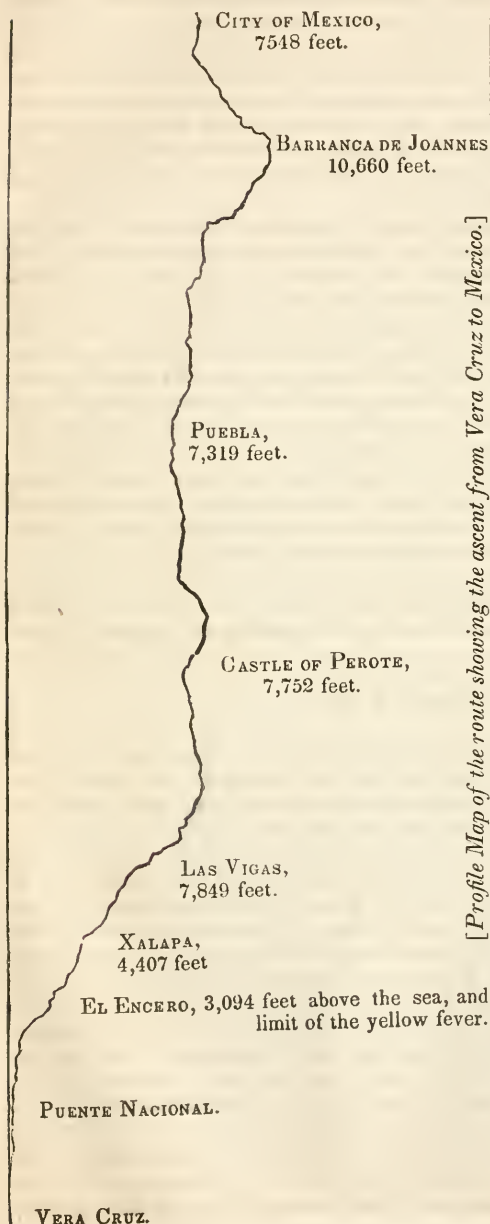
“ Our torch-bearers were sent off to the extremity of these galleries, that we might form an idea of their extent in a straight line. They are both extensive and solid; the vaults are of porphyry, and the bottom of gray slate. In some places where the ore proved very rich, it has been taken from the sides and vaults, and the voids filled up with masonry, and beams worked in so as to form a firm support to the sides and roof. These galleries have been blasted out

and must have cost great labour, for the whole mountain is of porphyry to a great depth.

“ The exterior is covered with a crust of brescia, which extends not more than four or five feet from the surface. The ore is for the most part extracted by drilling and blasting; sometimes, but very rarely, the wedge can be used. On our return, we plodded painfully up these stairs, which the *cargadores* (porters) ascend with ease, with a load of ten or fifteen arrobas on their shoulders. They are paid according to the quantity they bring up; and some of these men will ascend, as we were told, from the perpendicular depth of 500 yards, carrying the enormous weight of 24 arrobas (600 pounds). In the court-yard into which we entered from the gallery, and where the workmen are searched, there was a large heap of ore, accumulated by each workman being obliged to bring a stone up in his hand every time he ascends, and throw it on this heap. There are about 1000 workmen at present employed, and in the course of a week a large pile is formed. The product of this belongs to the mine, and forms a fund for contingent expenses. The matrices of these ores, which we had here a good opportunity of examining, are principally quartz, amethyst, and rock crystal, horn stone, calcareous spar of a dark brown, and of pearl colour. The metals are pyrites of iron, arsenic, yellow copper, galena, gray and yellow blend, virgin gold and silver, sulphate of silver, both brittle and ductile, and rosicler, a rich silver ore of a bright rosy colour, which we did not see. This ore is so rare, that I could not meet with a specimen during my residence in Mexico. There are likewise veins with copper, lead, tin, cinnabar, antimony, and manganese; and the crystals of the carbonate of lime, that are found in this mine, are very large and perfect. We next visited the principal shaft, San José, an octagon, the diameter 11 yards, and the perpendicular depth 600. This great work, which cost upwards of a million of dollars, is in some places blasted through solid rock, and in others, walled up with hewn stone: the masonry is admirably well executed. The workmen threw bundles of lighted hay down the shaft, which blazed as they descended, and which we saw fall into the water, now not more than 250 yards from the summit, and rising every day. After failing in his attack on the city of Guanaxuato, Mina caused the machinery of the mine of Valenciana to be burnt, and the owners have not funds to renew it. From these mines we went to a shaft called Guadeloupe, where we found two malacates in operation. These machines are used to free mines from water, and to draw up the ore. A malacate is a drum of about ten feet in diameter, attached to a vertical spindle, a shaft of 15 feet long, which is shod with steel, and turns in steel sockets. Poles project at right angles from the shaft, to which the horses are harnessed. Two ropes are passed round the drum, and over pulleys supported by poles twelve feet high, and about 10 feet apart, and leading to the well. As the drum turns, one rope descends, and the other is wound up, and raises a large skin full of ore, or buckets of water, by what the French call a *chapelet*. At the principal or octagonal shaft, eight malacates were kept constantly at work, night and day. Each malacate was moved by 12 horses, and drew up, by a succession of buckets, 78 arrobas (975 quarts) every nine or ten minutes. 95,000 arrobas, or 31,800 cubic feet of water, might be raised by this means every 24 hours. It happened to be a sale day, (Wednesday,) and in the same court where the malacates were at work, we saw three or four hundred people collected; some exposing the ore to the best advantage, and others examining its quality. This mine is now worked by halves—the workmen receiving one half of the profits, and the owners of the mine the other. The workmen were busily employed in arranging the pieces of ore in parallelograms, composed of small circular heaps of ore. They were very careful to place the richest pieces at top, and the fairest side in sight.

CHAPTER VII.

ROADS—TRAVELLED ROUTES—MODES OF TRAVELLING.

(1.) *Vera Cruz to Mexico.*

[Profile Map of the route showing the ascent from Vera Cruz to Mexico.]

FROM Vera Cruz to Mexico is a distance of 290 miles. The route over which the road now passes is the same through which Cortes passed on his ever-memorable expedition. The road is broad and paved with round stones precisely as the principal streets are in our American cities. It was built in the year 1804. Humboldt, who was in Mexico at the time, compared it to the roads over the Simplon and Mount Cevis. The numerous bridges spanning ravines and water-courses are all of arched masonry, and of the most substantial workmanship. The road has for its protection against the invasion of foreign foes, castles erected on the most commanding eminences and passes.

There is a very good line of stages, making three trips every week, between Vera Cruz and Mexico. The fare is enormously high—\$50 for a single seat, and to ensure the safety of baggage, it is usual to forward it by a separate conveyance, the cost of which is \$10 per trunk. The line of stages was established by an American some years ago, but is now owned by a rich Mexican. The stages are built at Troy, N. Y., and the drivers are all Americans. Seven horses are usually driven; two at the wheels, three abreast, and two more in the lead.

The stage leaves Vera Cruz at eleven o'clock at night, and arrives the next evening about three o'clock, at Jalapa, a distance of ninety miles. For the first few miles the road passes along the sandy beach; it then

begins to ascend by a gradually inclined plane. It soon enters the mountain gorges by a deep dell of lofty and perpendicular rocks, all of which it may be observed command the pass and make it easily tenable by a small body of troops against a vastly larger force. The defenders might be scattered over a variety of points, where they would remain entirely secure from the assaults of an invading army. For about one hundred miles, until you reach Las Vigas, there is one continual ascent, among defiles, until the height of 7,849 is reached above the level of the sea. Here the steepest portion of the road ends; but thence to Perote, and so onward to Puebla, it passes over an uninterrupted series of abrupt descents and ascents, and through an exceedingly broken country. At Perote there is a strong fortress or castle, which completely commands the pass. Between Puebla and Mexico, there is another steep mountain, (see engraving) and the traveller must reach the height of 10,660 feet before he begins to descend into the valley of Mexico. The entire journey is usually performed in about sixty-three hours of travelling time.

“Travelling from Vera Cruz to Mexico,” says Mr. Thompson, “you are scarcely ever out of sight of caravans of muleteers going and returning. It is the mode of transportation universal in this country. A Frenchman some few years since established a line of waggons on the route, and died whilst I was in Mexico, leaving a fortune of some four hundred thousand dollars—all of which he had made from a very small beginning. Yet after his death no one was disposed to continue the business. The load of each mule is 400 pounds, for the freight of which, from Vera Cruz to Mexico, is \$20. The mules subsist on the coarsest and scantiest food. The drivers are a class of hardy men, who are never robbed, and are always faithful and honest.

“Although the whole road, from Vera Cruz to Mexico, passes through a country inexpressibly picturesque and beautiful, yet the ignorant, idle and degraded population, the total absence of cultivation and improvement, and a general appearance of wildness and desolation, produced within me feelings partaking of gloom and melancholy. Neither in going nor returning did I see one human being, man, woman or child, engaged at work of any sort. The great mass of population doze out their lives with no higher thoughts or purposes than the beasts that perish.”

(2.) *Tampico to Mexico.*

The distance from Tampico to Mexico is 312 miles. The road leads over precipitous mountains, and is altogether unfit for carriages. A traveller who passed over this route in 1822, describes the country as level for 48 miles from Tampico, with a rich black soil, few trees except palms, and thinly inhabited. This was followed by a broken and hilly region for a distance of nearly 100 miles, possessing a deep soil, but destitute of water during the greater part of the year. The traveller now encountered a steep and rugged mountain, belonging to the great chain of *Sierra de Madre*. The ascent was difficult and fatiguing, and occasionally frightful precipices showed themselves at the feet of his mules. After a long ride up the mountain, he began to descend on the other side, which was so steep that his party conceived it safer to take to their feet;

fastening the bridles to the mules' heads, they sent the beasts in advance, followed with great difficulty for three quarters of an hour, until they reached the Indian village of Clacalula. The succeeding nine miles were travelled in the bed of the river Cañada, (it being the dry season;) upon leaving which, they commenced the ascent of Mount Penulco, which consumed two hours; this mountain exceeded in height any eminence they had yet passed, and the road, though wide and free from impediments, was winding in its course, and at every turn approached the edge of a precipice. For the next two days of their journey

they continued to ascend on a good road, and passing over several hills, at last began to descend to the rich and fertile valley of the Santiago, or the Rio Grande of the west. Here they found in plenty, bananas, oranges, and the avocado or alligator pear. But a formidable mountain height still rose before them; this was the mountain of San Ammonica, the dread of muleteers. Near the summit there is a pass of a peculiar character; as it is approached, a perpendicular precipice of about 150 feet presents itself, at the foot of which a narrow road is finally perceived, which in eight short, steep and desperate turns, conducts the traveller to the top, shuddering at every turn as he looks down and beholds the vast abyss below. A plain 22 miles in extent succeeds, which is crossed by good roads leading to the celebrated mining district and town of Real del Monte. In one hour after leaving this place, the road descends into the table-land of Mexico, and continues its course over a level plain for sixty miles to the capital. This journey occupied twelve days, or eighty-six hours actually on the road.

It is a remarkable fact that the only route through which a carriage can pass from the low-lands of the coast to the upper country, with the single exception of the road from Vera Cruz to Mexico, is through a pass leading from Monterey (288 miles west of Matamoras) to Saltillo.* These, then, are the only two routes by which an invading army can reach Mexico. A Mr. Phillips, who was sent out from England, in 1822, with some machinery for the mines of Catorce, (lat. 23 d.) gives an account of the method he was compelled to adopt to get it to its place of destination, which we transcribe. His machinery was loaded at Tampico, as being the nearest port to the mines of Catorce, and he left Altamira (a few miles from Tampico) on the 16th of May, with fourteen four-wheeled carriages or waggons, well loaded, drawn by oxen. In order to reach Catorce, which is situated on the table-lands, it was necessary to take a circuitous route, leading first in a northerly direction from Altamira to Monterey, thence west to Saltillo, over the carriage-road to the table-land, and thence southerly to the mines. The journey consumed several months, being protracted by various mischances and the bad state of the roads and bridges. "On the 15th of October," says Mr. Phillips, "we entered the city of Monterey, situated in a large bahia, or plain, surrounded by mountains, (part of the Sierra Madre; it lies in about 26 d. N. lat. The climate is most delightful; fruit abounds all the year round, and provisions of all kinds are cheap and plentiful. It contains 15,000 inhabitants, among whom are a great many old Spaniards, extremely wealthy. We stopped there a day or two to load four carts with four tons of castings for Saltillo, and left on the 17th, proceeding for three leagues over a most excellent road. Our route from Altamira to Monterey ran north by west-half-north, or nearly so, with trifling variations; on leaving Monterey, we proceeded due west. We started early on the 18th, and although our road was a continual ascent, we performed three leagues. On the 19th we descended over a rough broken road about three leagues; and on the 20th, yoked our cattle early in the morning and drove to Rinconada. Our road in the morning lay through a barrenca [ravine], which conducted us to a hill; the road is good, but the steepest, I believe, in the world for a carriage. We soon reached, however, El Puerto de los Muertos, [the gate of the dead,] the summit of the mountain, which derives its name, the Indians say, from a bloody battle fought there by the first conquerors and the natives. We stopped a little on the top of the hill to rest the bullocks, and in the evening yoked them again, and reached a rancho [village] about a league and a half distant from El Puerto.

"The next day we drove on smartly, and by twelve o'clock were three leagues on the road, when we halted opposite a large farm-house, the people of which were astonished at the sight of the boilers, and came running to know the use of

* Mexico in 1842, by Hon. George Folsom.

such tremendous things. The proprietor of the hacienda [farm-house] also came out to us, to whom Col. Martinez thought proper to mention our distressed situation, which he was no sooner acquainted with than he rode off to his house, and in about an hour afterwards we received a sufficient quantity of provisions for two days, consisting of beef and mutton, (boiled and roasted,) vegetables, bread, &c. &c. At four o'clock we left this abode of hospitality, and drove two leagues farther, and during the night felt the cold more sensibly than we had hitherto done since leaving the coast. On the 23d we arrived at Saltillo, twenty-five leagues from Monterey. Saltillo is situated on the side of a hill; the country around presents very different features from those of the *tierra caliente*, where the land is so fertile, and the herbage so luxuriant. On this side of the Sierra Madre there is nothing but barren mountains and plains destitute of vegetation. Saltillo contains about 12,000 inhabitants, and has several good streets, communicating at right angles with the Plaza [public square,] in the centre of which is a large reservoir, which supplies the town with water. We had generally from the coast to this place met with great civility and attention, but the inhabitants here showed us every possible mark of kindness and politeness. On the second day after we arrived, we dined, by invitation, with a cousin of Iturbide's, and met all the principal people and authorities of the town; the dinner was most splendidly served up in the Spanish style, and to us who had fared badly during five months before, was no ordinary sort of treat. We contracted for several carts to take all our castings, except the cylinder, to Catorce, which latter, together with the boilers, were all that remained for our own carriages. We left Saltillo on the 26th of October, and proceeded four leagues over an excellent road, then stopped for the night at a small rancho. Our bullocks by this time began to fail us; we consequently here contracted with a man to drive us to Catorce with his own cattle, which we reached without much difficulty in about ten days.

(3.) *Texas to Mexico.*

In former times it was not unusual to travel by land from New Orleans to the city of Mexico. The road led from Natchitoches, on the Red River, through the province of Texas by Nacogdoches, San Antonio de Bexar, and Presidio de Rio Grande, where it crossed that river about 500 miles from its mouth, to Monclova, Saltillo, or Monterey; thence through the interior of the country to the capital. The length of the whole route is stated by Humboldt to be 540 leagues, or 1620 miles; he adds that "it presents very few obstacles until it reaches the Rio Grande, and the ascent to the table-lands begins only from Monterey, where the declivity is by no means rapid.

Captain Pagés, of the French navy, travelled over this route to Mexico, and thence to Acapulco, in 1767; and the late General Pike, of the United States army, marched with a small party along a portion of it in 1807. The French traveller, having arrived at San Antonio de Bexar, pursued a direct course to Saltillo, crossing the Rio Grande at Laredo; and thence continued his route to the city of Mexico. He reckons the distance from San Antonio to Saltillo 160 leagues, and from Saltillo to Mexico 220 leagues, in all 380 leagues, or 1,050 miles. Pike, who had been surprised by a Spanish force while exploring the head-waters of the Arkansas, and taken to Santa Fe, returned to the United States by the way of Chihuahua and Monclova, and thence through the province of Texas to Natchitoches, crossing the Rio Grande, (above Laredo) and passing through San Antonio de Bexar, then the capital of the province.

According to the journal of this officer, he consumed five days in the march from Monclova to Presidio Rio Grande, averaging 20 miles per day, and about the same length of time in going from Presidio Rio Grande to San Antonio de

Bexar, averaging 30 miles per day. The road from San Antonio to Saltillo, crossing the Rio Grande at Laredo, is shorter and more direct than the upper route by the Presidio.

For information respecting the portion of the route, from Saltillo to the mines of Catorce, see the account of Mr. Phillips' journey on a preceding page.

From Saltillo to Catorce is 164 miles. After leaving Catorce, the travelled route passes along a good carriage-road along the base of a mountainous range. For a long distance of country after leaving this place, water is obtained with so much difficulty at certain seasons of the year, that travellers are obliged to pay for it. It is supplied from wells of great depth, which are brackish and unpleasant; and even then is only to be obtained for money, at intervals of twenty miles distance, the keepers of the wells living hard by in miserable huts. Mr. Ward, (the British envoy,) who visited the Catorce mines in November, 1826, describes the country on this part of his route as dreary and deserted, without water or cultivation; and adds, that at Guadalupe his party paid two dollars for permission to water their animals at the *tanque* belonging to the estate.

From Catorce to San Luis Potosi is 156 miles. San Luis, including the *barrios* or suburbs, is stated by Mr. Ward to contain between fifty and sixty thousand inhabitants, and it is supposed that as many more are concentrated within a circle of six leagues in its immediate vicinity. The town is well built, the streets intersecting each other at right angles. The houses in the Plaza, or public square, and on the principal avenues leading to it, are of stone. This city is the centre of one of the richest mining districts in Mexico. It also derives great advantages from its situation as the natural *dépôt* for the trade of Tampico with the northern and western states of the republic, which receive through this channel a large proportion of their foreign imports. The distance from San Luis to Tampico is about 200 miles, in a direct line to the coast. Mr. Poinsett passed over the route in thirteen days, in the autumn of 1822, and Capt. Lyon in about the same length of time, in the spring of 1827. Both travellers describe the intermediate country as interesting and agreeable for the most part, although destitute of good roads suitable for carriages.

Leaving San Luis Potosi for the capital, the first stage is 16 leagues to the hacienda and village of Jaral; thence to the town of San Felipe 10 leagues, crossing a branch of the Sierra Madre by a long and difficult ascent and descent, very inconvenient, says Mr. Ward, but not absolutely dangerous for carriages. From San Felipe the road leads over an elevated plain for six or seven leagues; it then becomes steep and mountainous for four leagues to the hacienda of La Tlachiquéra, situated in the centre of a ridge of mountains, and about midway between San Felipe and the city of Guanajuato. These mountains may be avoided by a circuitous route after leaving San Luis, passing to the west through the town of Leon. Guanajuato is situated in the midst of a rich mining and agricultural district. The mine of Valenciana alone, between the years 1766 and 1803, yielded silver to the amount of 165,000,000 dollars. The adjacent country, comprehending an extensive territory under the name of the Baxio, forms an immense plain, highly cultivated, and producing in great perfection all the fruits of Europe, and many of those indigenous to the tropics. Thus situated, Guanajuato has long been considered one of the most opulent and flourishing cities in Mexico. It is 220 miles from the capital. The next places on the route are Irapuato, 11 leagues; Salamanca, five leagues; Zelaya, nine leagues; Querétaro, 10 leagues; all of which are populous towns, situated on the fertile plains of the Baxio. The aqueduct by which the town of Querétaro is supplied with water from a spring in the mountains, at a distance of nearly nine miles, is very picturesque. Its arches are lofty, light and bold, and its extent gives it an air of great magnificence as it stretches across the plain. It contains 40,000 inhabitants, and is distant 120 miles from the capital. The next town is San Juan

del Rio, which stands in a rich and highly cultivated valley, eight or ten leagues from Querétaro. Arroyo Sarco is the name of a large hacienda 12 leagues from San Juan. The river lower down takes the name of Moctezuma, and afterwards unites with the Panuco, having Tampico at its mouth. From Tula to Huehuetoca, the distance is ten leagues, through a desert and barren country. At this place terminates the celebrated *desague* or drain, constructed for the purpose of carrying off the waters of the lakes in the valley of Mexico, to prevent an inundation of the capital. It is a vast canal, cut through a hill, from 100 to 130 feet deep, and at the summit between 200 and 300 feet wide; its length is about 14 miles. Huehuetoca is the last stage before arriving at the capital, from which it is distant eleven leagues. Such is the route from the banks of the Rio Grande to the city of Mexico.

[4.] *From Independence, Missouri, to Santa Fé.*

For the last twenty years trading companies have carried on a lucrative and constantly increasing traffic with New Mexico, by way of Independence, the western frontier town of Missouri and the general *point d'appui* for all the expeditions to the remote west. It has grown, mainly under the influence of this traffic, to be a large and flourishing town, and furnishes the supplies of all kinds required for the journey over the great prairies which stretch from this point to the Rocky Mountains. It stands within two or three miles of the Missouri river, and is but twelve from the Indian border.

The route is perfectly accessible and not especially dangerous. Trading companies of from one to two hundred persons, and very often of less, frequently escort trains of merchandize, with large quantities of gold and silver, to the amount of several hundred thousand dollars, in safety across the prairies, and but little danger is apprehended from the predatory attacks of the various tribes of Indians which dwell upon the route. Occasionally some daring assault from them has led to sending an escort of U. S. troops, but generally the trading caravans provide sufficiently for their own defence.

From St. Louis to Independence the distance is about 250 miles, directly across the State of Missouri, and the river is navigable for nearly the whole distance. From Independence to Santa Fé, the distance is set down by Mr. Gregg, in his valuable work upon the Commerce of the Prairies, at 775 miles, and the trip across is performed, under favourable circumstances, in about sixty days. There is nothing like a human habitation to be met throughout the route, until the settlements of New Mexico are reached. For nearly 500 miles the route lies through an uninterrupted prairie, except the narrow fringes of timber which border the streams. At the distance of 200 miles from Independence, buffalos begin to be found, and hunting affords at once excitement and food for the expedition. Quagmires are frequently encountered, over which paths are readily made by crossing them with brush and throwing earth upon it. At the distance of 270 miles, the Arkansas is crossed; and at this point the prairie soil, which before has been rich, fertile, and covered with the most beautiful vegetation, becomes more barren, and presents thenceforward a far more cheerless and dreary appearance. Between the Arkansas and the Cimarron rivers, a distance of fifty-eight miles, intervenes a sandy desert, formerly difficult of passage and destitute of water, and the route for some distance farther, continues to become one of considerable labour. After crossing the river, dense thickets are encountered, and the face of the country assumes the character of a mountainous region, being broken into tall cliffs, deep gorges, and a generally rough and hard surface. After passing the Upper and Cold Springs, which are 330 miles from Independence, the track becomes perfectly plain and easy, and from the top of Round Mountain, 50 miles farther ahead, a magnifi-

cent view is obtained of the immense plains which lie adjacent, destitute of timber, except around the bluffs of ravines, and only occasionally covered with herds of countless buffalo.

A traveller who lately passed over this route gives the following description of his journey :—

“The Indian country as far as Council Grove, 200 miles from the line, is perhaps as fine a tract of country as can be found in the world ; there is rather a scarcity of timber, but in soil and water none can be superior. The Council Grove, as it is called, is the ancient site of a once proud and mighty city. It is situated on the main White river, which here forms a crescent or curve of about nine miles in circumference, and contains more than a hundred mounds, half of which are more than ten times as large as those near Vincennes ; those in the centre are in the form of a square, many containing a surface of more than two acres, some in the form of a triangle, and others perfectly round. Here the Pawnee, Arapahoe, Comanche, Loups, and Eutaw Indians, all of whom are at war with each other, meet and smoke the pipe once a year in peace. Every person and every thing are held sacred for many miles around this peaceful grove. This custom has been handed down for many centuries among the red men, and here their chiefs and great men are brought from hundreds of miles around to be interred. The numerous camps everywhere to be seen around here, at once convince the traveller that this is the great rendezvous of thousands annually. From hence onward for 500 miles, there is nothing to be seen but one eternal desert, without a solitary stick of timber to cheer the eye. Nothing here is to be had but buffalo dung to cook the food that is used, but with this the whole prairies are covered, and it is an excellent substitute.

“We overtook the caravan in sight of the Arkansas, about 400 miles from the line of the United States, and 800 from St. Louis, without being troubled by the Indians, and attached ourselves thereto for duty in crossing the river, which is much larger than at the mouth, and always muddy, and rolling her quicksands into bars almost every hour, so that fords and crossings are dangerous and uncertain. From the Arkansas river, the scarcity of water commences, and even the little to be had is so deeply impregnated with salt, sulphur, &c., that stern necessity alone brings the traveller to the use of it. On the Simerone river there are one or two good springs, at one of which we met 500 warriors of the Arapahoe Indians, who treated us with a proper friendship, being elated with their success ten days before, when in battle they killed seventy-six Pawnees. We gratified them by encamping on the battle-ground, where the unburied bodies were yet almost unbroken. The next day we visited their lodge, six miles from the battle-ground, where we had a full view of savage life in a perfect state of nature ; amongst 500 women and children, there were but few who had ever before seen the dress and equipage of the white man.

“After leaving these friendly Indians, we were cheered in eight or ten days with the far distant appearance of the Rocky Mountains. From day to day, as we approached them, the beauty of the scenery increased, and when within twenty miles, the reflection of the sun through the snow that eternally crowns their highest peaks, is splendid beyond description. Here the traveller beholds a chain of many hundred, nay, thousands of miles, varied with nothing but the white caps of snow and rough and terrific precipices, until you reach the crossings of Canadian river, at the foot of the mountains ; and here the pine and cedar tree on the mountain side and in the valley again greet the eye. On this plain we encountered about 300 Eutaw warriors ; but after repeated skirmishing, they were fain to retreat without effecting any damage of consequence. From here to the good town of Bogas, we found water, wood, and good cheer. We arrived in this city on the 2d July, all in good health, in less than two months, the quickest trip ever made over the desert.

“ Santa Fé is situated in a valley ten miles long, and from two to five wide, surrounded by immense mountains covered with pine and cedar trees, and affords the most beautiful scene the eye can conceive, or the mind imagine. It is the seat of government of New Mexico, and is commanded by a governor-general. It is also a military post, port of entry, and depository of all the ancient archives of the neighbouring states. The houses are built of unburnt bricks, two feet long, six inches deep, and one foot wide, made with straw and mud, and dried in the sun; and such is their durability, that many houses are standing more than 200 years old, and look well; they are only one story high, handsomely whitewashed inside, with dirt floors. Even the palace in which his excellency resides, has no other than a dirt floor, but they are generally covered with carpets; the houses are covered with stones and dirt, and are flat-roofed, perfectly weather-proof. The town contains six churches, generally richly fitted out. The population is about 3600, all rigid Roman Catholics. It is situated on a small branch of the Rio Grande del Norte, about 14 miles from the main river, which is here near the size of the Wabash, at Vincennes.

“ The inhabitants are honest—perhaps more so than those of the same class in the United States; and proud and vain of their blood, both the descendants of the ancient Spaniards of unmixed descent, and those of the Spaniards and Indians. The pure blood cannot hold office here; the present governor-general and all the officers of state, are of the mixed blood of Montezuma. In this place there is but one officer of justice, the *alcalde*, and he has nothing to do.

“ The commerce of Santa Fé is certainly very considerable; and although there is but one gold mine worked here now, and one copper mine, yet the daily receipts afford about 600 or 700 dollars net. The number of hands employed at work is from 100 to 220. The revolution has set every thing back here in the mining departments, as they were generally held by natives of old Spain, and accounted forfeits to the general government after the revolution.

The distance from Santa Fé to Mexico may be computed as follows: To Passo del Norte, 210 miles; to Chihuahua, 180 miles; to Jose del Parral, 140 miles; to Durango, 240 miles; to Somnete, 90 miles; to Zacatecas, 85 miles; to Aguascalientes, 80 miles; to Guanajuato, 100 miles; to Mexico, 210 miles; in all, 1335 miles.

[5.] *Acapulco to Mexico.*

In former times Acapulco derived great importance from its enjoying a monopoly of the trade between Manilla, in the Philippine Islands, (belonging to the crown of Spain,) and Mexico. The richly-freighted Spanish galleons made its noble harbour their only place of resort on the western coast, and extensive fairs for the sale of every description of goods suitable for the markets of the Indian ocean, were held in the town. M. Pagés, the French traveller, embarked here in one of those ships, on his arrival from New Orleans *viâ* the city of Mexico, the 2d of April, 1768. The cargo, among other things, comprised three millions of piastres in specie, destined in part to defray the expenses of government in the Philippine islands; and of the hundred passengers on board, at least forty, says Pagés, were monks. The harbour of Acapulco is one of the finest in the world. Capt. Basil Hall, who visited it in 1822, expresses the highest professional admiration of this celebrated port. He says, “ it is easy of access; very spacious; the water not too deep; the holding ground good; quite free from hidden dangers; and as secure as the basin at Portsmouth dock-yard. From the interior of the harbour the sea cannot be discovered; and a stranger coming to the spot by land, would imagine he was looking over a sequestered lake.”

The Mexican muleteers reckon the distance from Acapulco to Mexico at 110 leagues; other itineraries make it five or six leagues less.

CHAPTER VIII.

INHABITANTS, POPULATION, AND GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO.

INHABITANTS.

The *inhabitants* of Mexico are generally divided into seven distinct races, though there are various definable and indefinable intermixtures of all these. The first class are the Europeans. The second race consists of the Creoles, or native whites of the European race. In these were found the titled nobility. The third race comprehends the Mestizos, or the offspring of whites and Indians. They are as numerous almost as the Indians. They are almost white. The fourth race is that of the Mulattoes, or the offspring of whites and negroes. The fifth race is that of the native Indians. The sixth comprehends the African negroes and their descendants. They have straight hair, are few in number, and are all either free or under the protection of laws whose eventual operation is to liberate them. The seventh race is the offspring of negroes and Indians, called Zamboes or Chinese.

The Indians form about two-fifths of the whole population. They have not only survived the process of civilization, but their number is on the increase. There are now hardly any other classes of people than the rich and poor. The titled nobility were always Creoles, and were the highest. The lawyers, merchants, and shopkeepers, are next in influence. The most numerous, and lowest, is the disorderly rabble that infests the cities, especially Mexico, where there are 20,000, who beg, steal, and, as a last resort, work for a subsistence. They resemble the Lazzaroni of Naples, and live much in the open air. They are partially fed by the convents, which have charitable funds for the daily distribution of food to the poor.

Of the number of the inhabitants we cannot speak with certainty, as no census has been taken recently.—All writers, however, agree that the population fairly estimated is about as represented in the following table, which presents a view of the population of the states and territories, together with their capitals.

States.	Population.	Capitals.	Population.
Chiapas - - -	93,000	Chiapas - - -	3,000
Yucatan - - -	500,000	Merida - - -	10,000 +
Tabasco - - -	75,000	Tabasco - - -	5,000 +
Oaxaca - - -	600,000	Oaxaca - - -	40,000
Vera Cruz - - -	200,000	Vera Cruz - - -	30,000 +
Puebla - - -	900,000	Puebla - - -	70,000
Mexico - - -	1,500,000	Tlalpan - - -	6,000
Mechoacan - - -	450,000	Valladolid - - -	25,000
Queretaro - - -	200,000	Queretaro - - -	40,000
Guanajuato - - -	450,000	Guanajuato - - -	60,000
Xalisco - - -	800,000	Guadalaxara - - -	60,000
Zacatecas - - -	272,000	Zacatecas - - -	25,000
San Luis Potosi - - -	250,000	San Luis Potosi - - -	40,000
New Leon - - -	100,000	Monterey - - -	15,000
Tamaulipas - - -	150,000	Aguayo - - -	6,000
Cohahuila - - -	125,000	Monclova - - -	3,000
Chihuahua - - -	112,000	Chihuahua - - -	30,000
Durango - - -	175,000	Durango - - -	25,000
Sonora and Cinaloa - - -	180,000	Villa Fuerte - - -	4,000
Federal District - - -	-	Mexico - - -	180,000

		Territories.	
Trascala	- - -	Trascala	- - - small town
New Mexico	- - 150,000	Santa Fe	- - - 3,500
Colima	- - 150,000	Colima	- - - small town
Upper California	- 25,000	Monterey	- - - 2,500
Lower California	- 15,000	Loreto	- - - -

M. de Mofras, in speaking of the population of Upper California, says that in 1842, the whole population, (exclusive of Indians) was only 5,000, distributed thus :

Californians descended from Spaniards	-	4,000
Americans from the United States	- -	360
English, Scotch, and Irish	- - -	300
European Spaniards	- - -	80
French (including Canadians)	- - -	80
Germans, Italians, Portuguese, Sandwich-Islanders, and others	- - - -	90
Mexican colonists	- - -	90
Total,		5,000

To these were to be added, at that time, 300 convicts and soldiers who had just arrived with General Micheltorena.

Of the foreigners, the Americans were particularly concentrated at Los Angeles and Branciforte, the English and Spaniards at Santa Barbara and Monterey, and the French at Los Angeles and Monterey.

Among the English and Americans were many discharged or runaway seamen ; but the bulk of the latter consisted of emigrants from the West, the number of whom must have increased greatly in the last few years.

This population was distributed as follows :

District of San Diego	- - - -	1,300
Do. of Santa Barbara	- - - -	800
Do. of Monterey	- - - -	1,000
Do. of San Francisco	- - - -	1,000
Scattered over the country among the Missions	-	1,100
Total, spread over a territory of about 2,000 square leagues - - - -		5,000

The population of the whole confederacy is estimated at present to be about 7,000,000 souls, including about 3,000,000 Indians, and as mixed breed.

GOVERNMENT.

The government of Mexico is intended to be republican, but the frequent political changes which have taken place, renders a brief history of them somewhat necessary to a proper understanding of its present political condition. Her history is deeply interesting, and from it the world may glean many lessons of instruction. Our own country, now commencing a *new* era, would do well to study it.

Mexico was subdued by the Spaniards under Cortes, in 1521. Montezuma was at that time emperor, and fell in defence of his capital. The inhabitants were considerably advanced in civilization ; they were acquainted with the arts of working gold, silver, and copper, and with a kind of printing ; and their cities

were adorned with temples and palaces, and regulated by a police. The country continued a province of Spain till 1810, when an insurrection commenced in Durango, and after a variety of revolutionary movements, Inturbide, a Creole, caused himself to be proclaimed emperor, in 1822. His imperial sway was brief, as his empire was overthrown in the following year, and he was banished the country. In 1824, the Mexicans adopted a constitution modelled on that of the United States. This constitution was not, however, sufficient to prevent civil dissensions, and the sword was too often appealed to, to decide the claims of rival chiefs or factions. But it preserved a nominal existence until 1835, when it was abolished by a decree of congress, suppressing the state constitutions, and establishing a central government. Several of the states opposed this measure, and the inhabitants of Texas, who were desirous of forming a separate state, having had their requests rejected, refused to acknowledge the new government, and established a provisional government for themselves. In the following spring, Santa Anna invaded Texas, and was defeated at San Jacinto, and made prisoner. After his return to Mexico, he remained upon his estate until 1839, when he made an attack upon the French who landed at Vera Cruz, in which he lost his leg, but recovered his reputation, and in the fall of 1842, overthrew and banished Bustamente. The chiefs of the army then assembled at a little village near Mexico, and established a provisional government, until a new constitution could be formed, for which purpose members were elected. They assembled, and after a free discussion, were about to adopt a *federal* constitution, but this created so much dissatisfaction throughout the republic, that the work of the convention was denounced, and the President closed its session. A new convention assembled, the members chiefly nominated by the President. They adopted a constitution which went into effect in 1844, a very good synopsis of which follows, as given by Mr. Thompson

Slavery is forever prohibited.

The liberty of the Press is guaranteed; *a guarantee, however, purely theoretical; it is no freer than in France, nor as free.*

Equally theoretical is the provision that no one shall be arrested but by the authority of law.

No taxes are to be imposed but by the legislative authority.

Private property not to be taken for public use, but with just compensation.

Mexicans to be preferred for public offices to strangers, if their qualifications are equal—a *qualification, by the way, of this provision which neutralizes it.*

Persons who have attained the age of eighteen years, if married, are entitled to the rights of citizens; if unmarried, twenty-one years; and those who have an annual income of two hundred dollars, either from labour or the profits of capital.

After the year 1850, those only are to exercise the privileges of a citizen who can read and write.

By becoming a domestic servant, the privileges of a citizen are suspended; so, also, pending a criminal prosecution—being an habitual drunkard or gambler, a vagrant or keeping a gaming-house.

The rights of citizenship are lost by conviction of an infamous crime, or for fraudulent bankruptcy, or by malversation in any public office.

The legislative power is composed of a house of deputies and a senate, one deputy for every seventy thousand inhabitants; a supernumerary deputy shall be elected in all cases to serve in the absence of the regular deputy.

The age prescribed for members of Congress is thirty years. They must have an annual income of twelve hundred dollars. One half of the members to be re-elected every two years.

The Senate is composed of sixty-three members, two-thirds of whom are to be elected by the departmental assemblies, the other third by the House of

Deputies, the President of the Republic, and the Supreme Court; each department to vote for twenty-three persons, and those having the highest number of votes of the aggregate of all the departmental assemblies are elected Senators. The judges of the Supreme Court and the President shall vote in like manner for the remaining third; and out of the names thus voted for by each of those departments of the government, the House of Deputies selects the proper number (twenty-one.) The first selection of this third of the Senators to be made by the President alone.

The President of the Republic and Judges of the Supreme Court are required to vote only for such persons as have distinguished themselves by important public services, civil, military, or ecclesiastical. Amongst others disqualified from being elected members of the House of Deputies are the Archbishops, Bishops, and other high Ecclesiastical officers.

The Senators elected by the Departments are required to be five agriculturists, and the same number of each of the following occupations—miners, merchants, and manufacturers; the remainder to be elected from persons who have filled the office of President, Minister of State, Foreign Minister, Governor of a Department, Senator, Deputy, Bishop, or General of Division. The age of a Senator is thirty-five years, and an annual income of two thousand dollars is required.

One-third of the Senate to be renewed every three years.

All laws must originate in the House of Deputies.

All treaties must be approved by both Houses of Congress. Congress has a veto upon all the decrees of the Departmental Assemblies which are opposed to the Constitution or the laws of Congress.

Congress are forbidden to alter the laws laying duties on imports which are intended for the protection of domestic industry.

No retrospective law or laws impairing the obligations of contracts to be passed.

The Senate to approve the President's nomination of foreign ministers, consuls, and of officers in the army above the rank of Colonel.

Members of Congress not to receive executive appointments except with certain limitations, amongst which is the consent of the body to which they belong.

The other powers of Congress are pretty much the same as in our own and other popular Constitutions. The President must be a native of the country, and a layman, and hold his office for the term of five years. It is made his duty to supervise the courts of justice, and he may prescribe the order in which cases shall be tried. He may impose fines not exceeding five hundred dollars upon those who disobey his lawful commands. Certain large powers are conferred upon him in relation to Concordats, Bulls, Decrees, and other ecclesiastical matters. He possesses a very qualified veto upon the acts of Congress. He may call an extra session of Congress, and prescribe the only subjects to be considered. He cannot exercise any military command without the consent of Congress. He cannot leave the Republic during his term of office, nor for one year after its expiration, but with the consent of Congress, nor go more than six leagues from the Capital, without the like permission. He can in no case alienate, exchange or mortgage any portion of the territory of the Republic. All his acts must be approved by the Secretary of the Department to which it properly belongs. He cannot be prosecuted criminally except for Treason against the national independence or the form of government established by the Constitution during his term of office, nor for one year afterwards.

During the temporary absence of the President, his functions devolve upon the President of the Senate; if his absence continues longer than fifteen days a President *ad interim* shall be elected by the Senate. The other grants of power to the Executive seem to be pretty much copied from our own Constitution.

The different Secretaries may attend the Sessions of either branch of Con-

gress, whenever required by them, or so ordered by the President, to give any explanations which may be desired. The Secretaries are responsible for all acts of the President in violation of the Constitution and laws which they may have approved.

The Council of the President consists of seventeen members selected by himself. These Councillors must be thirty-five years old, and have served at least ten years without intermission in some public station.

The Judges of the Supreme Court must be forty years old.

The government may be impleaded in this Court by any individual (I think a wise and just provision); as may also the Archbishops and Bishops in particular cases.

A permanent court martial is also organized, composed of Generals and lawyers, appointed by the President.

Each Department has an assembly of not more than eleven, nor less than seven members. Their powers are to impose taxes for the use of the Department; establish schools and charitable institutions; make roads and keep them in order; arrange the mode of raising troops which may be required of the Department; establish corporations; superintend the police, and encourage agriculture; propose laws to the Congress, and fit persons to the President for the office of Governor of the Department (from the persons thus recommended, the President, except in extraordinary cases, must make the selection,) establish judicial tribunals for their Departments, with many other powers of a similar character, and constituting the assembly a sort of state legislature, with jurisdiction of matters appertaining strictly to the Department.

The whole Republic is divided into sections of five hundred inhabitants. Each of these sections selects by ballot one elector. These electors in turn elect others in the ratio of one for every twenty of the electors thus primarily elected. These last constitute the electoral college of the Department, which again elect the deputies of the general Congress, and the members of the Departmental assembly. All persons who have attained the age of twenty-five years are eligible as primary electors. The secondary electors must also have an income of five hundred dollars a year. On the first of November preceding the expiration of the term of office of the President, each of the Departmental assemblies is required to meet and cast their votes for his successor. A majority of the votes of this assembly decides the vote of this Department. On the second day of January both houses of Congress assemble together and declare the election. If no one has received the votes of a majority of the Departments, the two houses of Congress make the election from the two who have received the greatest number of votes. If more than two have an equal number of votes, the election is made from those who have received such equal number. If one has received a high number, and two others have received a less and equal number of votes, Congress selects by ballot one of these last to compete with him who has received a high number. This election is required to be finished in a single session.

In cases of a tie a second time in these elections, the choice is to be made by lot.

Punishments shall in no case extend to confiscation of property, or to attainder.

No cruel punishment shall be inflicted in capital cases, only such as are necessary to take life.

The Judges are responsible for any irregularities or mistakes in their official proceedings. They hold their offices for life.

Amendments of the Constitution to be made by a vote of two-thirds of both branches of Congress.

The Catholic religion is established to the exclusion of all others. Most of the other provisions of the Constitution seem to be almost exactly copied from that of the United States.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ARMY.

THE unsettled state of Mexico, and the rapid succession of its political revolutions, have prevented the collection of statistical information of every sort; a census of the country has not been taken since the revolution in 1810, not even for the purpose of arranging the ratio of representatives in Congress. It is therefore impossible to give a correct statistical view of the Army and Navy.

In 1827, Mr. Ward, the British Chargé, had recourse to the public documents, and from them, gave the condition of the military and naval force of that period. Mexico was then divided into eighteen military districts, each under the order of a Commandant, who received his instructions from the Minister of War. The whole military force for that year, consisted of 58,955 men, of whom 32,161 were actually under arms; the remainder ready to be called out should their services be required. The troops of the line were composed of twelve battalions of Infantry, each of 823 men, (full war compliment, 1,223); twelve regiments of Cavalry, each of 559 men, (war compliment, 815); and three brigades of Artillery, of 1,767 men in all. In addition to these, there were thirty-four Presidential companies, consisting entirely of Cavalry, and employed, principally, in the protection of the northern frontier; and eleven companies of local Infantry and Cavalry, distributed upon different points of the coast. The first consisted of 3,317 men in all; the second of 1,120; making a grand total of 22,788 regular troops under arms.

Mexico possesses only five fortresses, St. Juan de Ulloa, Campeche, Perote, Acapulco, and San Blas—most of them in a state of decay.

The following table, made up from the Government Report, exhibits the quantity of arms of all kinds, in the public magazines, or distributed among the troops. Most of the muskets, sabres, pistols, and lances, were purchased in 1824, and are in good order. The brass artillery are all of Spanish manufacture, and beautiful; but many of the iron guns, twenty years ago, were unfit for service; but since that time large additions have been made to their military stores:—

QUANTITY OF ARMS IN POSSESSION OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IN 1827.

Brass cannon of different calibres	- - - -	308
Iron do do	- - - -	456
Brass culverines	- - - -	35
Mortars	- - - -	17
Corranades, &c.	- - - -	93
Cannon balls of from 36 to 6	- - - -	210,145
Rounds of grape	- - - -	19,913
Shells	- - - -	38,644
Muskets	- - - -	111,564
Rifles	- - - -	2,000
Carbines	- - - -	15,280
Pistols (pairs)	- - - -	8,000
Sabres, &c.	- - - -	26,500
Lances	- - - -	6,000
Ball cartridges	- - - -	3,701,113

Of the present actual condition of the military force of Mexico, we cannot for the reasons already stated, speak with any degree of accuracy; we must rely upon the personal observation of intelligent writers, whose residence in Mexico has given them some knowledge of its military and naval affairs.

In 1840, according to Mr. Mayer, the Mexican Army was composed of 14 Generals of Division, 26 Generals of Brigade. *Artillery*—3 Brigades, on foot; 1 do. mounted; 5 separate companies. *Engineer Corps*—1 Director General, 3 Colonels, 6 Lieutenant Colonels, 1 Adjutant, 14 Captains, 16 Lieutenants, 10 sub-Lieutenants. *Sappers*—1 Battalion. *Permanent Infantry*—8 Regiments of 2 battalions each, each battalion of 8 companies, each company of 112 men, officers included—or, in all, 14,336 persons; each soldier is paid \$11,93 3-4 per month. *Active Infantry*—9 Regiments; this body differs from the preceding, in being liable to service only when required by Government, or in other words, it is a sort of national militia, well drilled. Total number, 16,128. *Permanent Cavalry*—8 Regiments, each regiment composed of 2 squadrons, each squadron of 2 companies; each regiment composed in all of 676 men—or the 8 of 4,056 men, under a nominal pay of \$12,50 per month; 35 separate companies in various places throughout the Republic. *Active Cavalry*—6 Regiments, of 4 squadrons, each squadron of 2 companies.

The whole force amounting to about 40,000: this has been increased since 1840, and is now estimated at 50,000. Each officer and soldier is his own commissary, no rations being issued.

From a work, written by M. Dufлот de Mofras, entitled “Exportation du Territoire de l’Orégon, des Californies, et de la Mer Vermeille,” and lately published in Paris, by order of the French King, under the auspices of the President of the Council, (Marshal Soult), and of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, (M. Guizot), we make the following interesting extract:—

“The Mexican army is recruited in part by the aid of countrymen and Indians torn by force from their villages, and in part among the criminals shut up in the prisons and penitentiaries. I was myself informed by a Mexican colonel at Guadalajara, that, in order to supply the place of deserters, he had caused the eight hundred malefactors in the public prison to be paraded before him by squads, in order to choose from among them the best-looking and most robust men. This being done in the first place, he then inquired of each one the length of his punishment, and a convict, for instance, who had been condemned to imprisonment at hard labour for ten years, had the residue of his punishment remitted, on condition of his serving five years in a regiment. What could be expected from such soldiers? In Europe, the military uniform is, for him who wears it, an honourable distinction. The army is purified constantly by turning over the criminals to penitentiary establishments. In Mexico, the difference between the galley-slave and the soldier is almost null, since, as we see, the regiments are filled up by means of miserable bandits.

“Desertion cannot fail to be very great in an army where no military discipline is exercised, where no authority is respected: the countrymen escape and regain their farms, while the malefactors rejoin their bands, or hide themselves in the suburbs of the cities.

“In spite of the efforts of the new President (Santa Anna) to augment the military resources of Mexico, he has only succeeded thus far, in forming an effective force of twenty thousand soldiers, in rags, barefoot in great part, and armed with bad English muskets.

“The regiments of infantry are commonly composed of two battalions, and are commanded by a colonel. Each battalion, under the orders of a lieutenant-colonel, and frequently of an honorary colonel, is at the most of three hundred men, and many of them do not count one hundred and fifty. The companies, of twenty-five to thirty men, have for commander a lieutenant-colonel or major, to whom are joined a captain, two lieutenants, and two sub-lieutenants, that is to say, *one officer for four soldiers*. There are the same disproportions and the same disorders in the cavalry, and squadrons of fifty men include six or seven officers.

“The artillery would find it difficult to assemble thirty field-pieces, mounted and of the same calibre: as to siege, hill, and coast batteries, workmen, bridge-equipages, and artillery-train, they are things wholly unknown. Almost all the powder, even, has to be bought in the United States or in England.

“The engineer-arm, which is quite on a level with the artillery in regard to *matériel*, is composed of a battalion of two hundred men in garrison at Matamorras, and of a company occupying the barracks, ridiculously called the *citadel* of Mexico.”

“It will be perceived, that, judging from the number and composition of the *états-majors*, the Mexican army ought to exceed that of all Europe united; for though it has hardly *twenty thousand soldiers*, it counts *twenty-four thousand officers*.

“Besides, if mere individual courage is not wanting either to officers or soldiers, still it is not sustained by that ardour of patriotism, which enables men to bear up patiently under sufferings, privations, and reverses, and facilitates the greatest achievements.”

“Composed of six (seven) millions of inhabitants, Mexico is subjected to the intrigues of six or seven thousand officers; and * * * this beautiful country, so prosperous and so opulent when it was called New-Spain, is now crushed beneath a military despotism.

“At every point of the Mexican territory, the magnificent works of fortification, erected at great cost by the Spaniards, are falling into ruins. The frontiers of the North are stripped, and the northern provinces wasted by hordes of savages, who advance to within thirty leagues of the city of Mexico.”

Hon. Waddy Thompson, our late Mexican minister, in speaking of the Mexican army, says that they are generally collected “by sending out recruiting detachments into the mountains, where they hunt the Indians in their dens and caverns, and bring them in chains to Mexico; there is scarcely a day that droves of these miserable and more than half naked wretches are not seen thus chained together, and marching through the streets to the barracks, where they are scourged, and then dressed in a uniform made of linen cloth or of serge, and are occasionally drilled, which drilling consists mainly in teaching them to march in column through the streets. Their military bands are good, and the men learn to march indifferently well, but only indifferently well; they put their feet down as if they were feeling for the place, and do not step with that erect and graceful air which is so beautiful in well-drilled troops. As to the wheelings of well-trained troops, or the prompt and exact execution of other evolutions, they know nothing about them. There is not one in ten of these soldiers who has ever seen a gun, nor one in a hundred who has ever fired one before he was brought into barracks. It is in this way that the ranks of the army are generally filled up. In particular emergencies the prisons are thrown open, which always contain more prisoners than the army numbers, and these felons become soldiers, and some of them officers. Their arms, too, are generally worthless English muskets, which have been condemned and thrown aside, and are purchased at a low rate by the Mexican government. Their powder, too, is equally bad; in the last battle between Santa Anna and Bustamente, which lasted the whole day, not one cannon ball in a thousand reached the enemy; they generally fell about half way between the opposing armies.”

The *Rancheros* form an important part of the Mexican cavalry, and in the late contest on the Rio Grande, they bore a conspicuous part; among their achievements was the murder of Col. Cross, before active hostilities commenced between the two armies. “*Rancheros*” is an appellation derived from their occupation and mode of life, and is common to a similar class of men who subsist on the pampas of South America, half Indian and half Spanish in their extraction, gaunt, shrivelled, though muscular in their frames, and dark and swarthy-visaged as they are, these men are the Arabs of the American continent.

Living half of the time in the saddle, for they are unrivalled horsemen, with lasso in hand they traverse those vast plains in search of the buffalo and wild horse, who roam them in countless herds. The killing of these animals, and the preparation and sale of their hides, is their sole means of livelihood, other than occasionally lending a helping hand to some of the partisans in the civil wars that are being continually waged around them. Their costume generally consists of a pair of tough hide leggins with sandals of the same material bound together with leathern thongs, over which is a blanket with a hole in the centre large enough to allow the head to be thrust out, and which falls not ungracefully over their shoulders, leaving ample room for the play of their arms. Add to this a broad straw *sombrero*, and the lasso hanging at his saddle-pommel, and you have the *Ranchero* as he appears in the time of peace, or in the pursuit of his occupation. Join to this a long lance with a sharp spear head, ornamented with a strip of red bunting, on a horse as savage and unmanageable as himself, and his belt plentifully supplied with pistols and knives, and you have the *Ranchero* as a member of the troop of banditti, or as a soldier in a body of cavalry. Cowardly as they generally are in the open field, yet in a conflict among the chapparels of Mexico, or in an ambuscade, they are indeed a formidable enemy. Their power of enduring fatigue is almost inexhaustible, and a scanty meal per diem of jerked beef and plantain suffices them during months.

Such are the *Rancheros*, and under disciplined control they would be rendered the best light troops in the world. These are the men who comprise the great body of the Mexican cavalry, and they are to the armies of that nation what the *Cossacks* are to the *Russians*—ever on the alert, never to be surprised, and untiring in the pursuit of the foe when plunder, no matter how trifling, is to be obtained.

Such is the condition and character of the Mexican army; but notwithstanding the materials of which it is composed, it contains some men as brave as ever fought upon a battle field. The gallant manner in which they conducted themselves in the recent battles on the *Rio Grande*, has given the American people a high estimate of Mexican valour.

All accounts represent the Mexicans as having fought, on the 8th and 9th of May last, with the courage and desperation which would have reflected credit on the troops of any nation. They were nearly in a state of starvation, and had been promised the ample supplies of the American camp, in case they should secure the victory. They met the charge of our troops manfully, and stood the destructive fire pouring in upon them without giving way, until the works were encumbered with the dead and wounded; but notwithstanding their bravery, Mexicans cannot contend successfully against the superior skill and scientific knowledge of our officers, nor against the perfect discipline of our troops; therefore, in all contests with American soldiers, they must be defeated.

THE NAVY.

When the Spanish troops, after being driven from the capital and continent, occupied the castle of San Juan d'Ulloa, the necessity of driving them from this last stronghold, and the impossibility of effecting it without a naval force, induced the government to purchase six gunboats and two sloops of war in the United States, which, with one brig and two launches on the Pacific side, constituted, in 1823, the whole navy of Mexico. During the siege of the castle, which continued until November, 1825, this force gradually increased; until, in 1827, it consisted of one ship of the line, two frigates, one corvette, four brigs, one schooner, four gunboats, four large launches, and two pilot boats. With a squadron composed of such materials, Com. Porter attempted to blockade Havana, but he was unable to keep the sea a moment before Admiral Laborde.

squadron, and was forced to take refuge in Key West, whence he did not extricate himself for some time.

The present effective force consists of the steamer *Guadalupe*, 778 tons, two 68 shell guns, four of 12, and a machine for rockets; steamer *Montezuma*, 1100 tons, one 68 shell gun, two long 32's, two 32 pound gunnades, two 32 pound carronades, and a machine for rockets; brig *Mexican*, one shell gun of 12, and fourteen gunnades of 18; brig *Vera Cruzana Libre*, one shell gun of 32, six gunnades of 18, and 12 pound carronades; brig *Tempoalteca*, six carronades of 12; schooner *Eagle*, one shell gun of 32, and six 18 pound carronades; schooner *Liberty*, one shell gun of 12; schooner *Morelos*, one shell gun of 12; and four gunboats, each mounting a long 24 pounder on a pivot. All these vessels are stated to be deficient in men; and, with the exception of the two steamers and gunboats, require repairs before they would be able to put to sea.

It is uncertain whether the steamers *Guadalupe* and *Montezuma* now actually belong to the Mexican government. It is said that they were given as security by the Mexican government to an English firm in Vera Cruz, Messrs. McIntosh & Manning, for a loan of between 500 and \$600,000. This firm having possession of them, and being desirous of protecting their own interests, took advantage of the absence of the American squadron under Com. Conner, to send them to Havana, a neutral port, where they arrived under British colours on the 24th of May last.

CHAPTER X.

REVENUE, RESOURCES, EXPENDITURES, AND PUBLIC DEBT.

THE Revenue of Mexico is derived from duties on imports and exports: from imposts on internal commerce, from direct taxation, from the post office, stamped paper, tobacco, lotteries, cockpits, and playing cards; from the excise on ice and pulqué, which is the common beverage of the people, and from other sources of trifling importance.

The tariff of duties on imports is constantly changing, but always high. A few years ago, the duty on all goods not prohibited, was 25 per cent. ad valorem; on most articles, the value was fixed by the tariff, the residue was to be valued by appraisers. Tobacco, in leaf, snuff, and segars, paid a duty of \$2 a pound. Raw cotton, cotton yarn below No. 60, cotton tapes, and twist, wrought wax, macaroni, vermicelli, gold, silver, and silk lace, and a few other articles, were entirely prohibited.

The articles which may be imported free of duty are as follows:

Scientific and surgical instruments, quicksilver, all unbound books, except those contrary to the Catholic religion, which are strictly prohibited, drawings, paintings, sculpture, models and designs for teaching different arts, useful machinery, printed or manuscript music, exotic seeds or plants, flax, raw or manufactured, and a few other articles.

All produce of the country may be exported free of duty except cochineal, vanilla, gold, and silver.

In 1840, (according to Mr. Mayer, who had recourse to the best sources of information,) the revenues are stated, in the report of the minister of the treasury, as follows:

		Net proceeds, after deducting expenses of collection
Imposts on foreign commerce	-	\$7,115,849
Do. on interior	-	4,306,585
Do. on property, income, &c.	-	466,061
Exchanges, &c.	-	307,427
Creditos activos	-	3,309
Balances of accounts	-	355
Enteros de productos liquidos	-	452,146
Extraordinary subsidy	-	103
Arbitrio extraordinario	-	78,177
Capitacion	-	483
Donations	-	13,662
Total		\$12,744,157

Returns of the Custom Houses for the years 1841 and 1842.

Custom Houses.	Tonnage Duty.	Net Proceeds.
Vera Cruz - - -	\$31,032	\$3,374,528
Tampico - - -	7,363	1,019,046
Matamoras - - -	3,525	279,627
Mazatlan - - -	6,245	397,213
Guayamas - - -	2,092	46,189
Monterey - - -	810	85,982
Acapulco - - -	573	7,193
San Blas - - -	2,719	190,270
Total,	\$55,259	\$5,399,948

Reports from the other custom-houses of the republic had not been received.

A very large revenue is derived from internal commerce, as every article of commerce passing from one department to another, provided it has been opened, pays a heavy tax. The duty on money, for example, sent from Mexico to Vera Cruz to be exported, is five per cent., besides the six per cent. duty for its exportation. In 1840, the revenue from this source amounted to four millions and a half.

Direct taxation is another fruitful source of revenue, for every thing is taxed, "from the splendid palaces, coaches, and plate of the wealthy, to the dozen eggs which the poor Indian brings to market." A large revenue is received from the product of the mines, as it receives about five per cent.

The government enjoys a monopoly of the tobacco trade, the net proceeds of which is equal to about \$600,000 per annum. The culture of tobacco is prohibited, except in the districts of Orizaba and Cordova, where it is limited to a certain number of acres. The tobacco thus produced, is sold to the government agents at a stated price, much below its real value, and by them manufactured into segars and snuff, and sold at a large profit.

The Indians bring ice upon their backs from the mountains, a distance of some forty miles from Mexico, from which the government derives a large revenue, some years amounting to \$50,000.

A very considerable amount of revenue is received from special licenses given to merchants or private companies to import articles prohibited by law, for which a stipulated sum is paid.

The following, although not pretending to minute accuracy, may be regarded as in some degree an approximation to a correct estimate of the present revenues of the government, and the sources from which they are derived.

From maritime custom-houses	- - -	\$6,500,000
Interior commerce	- - -	4,500,000
Direct taxes	- - -	3,000,000
Per centage on produce of mines	- -	1,000,000
Profits of Mints	- - -	500,000
Tobacco monopoly	- - -	500,000
Post office, lotteries, manufactures of powder and salt	- - -	500,000
Tolls and all other sources	- - -	500,000
	Total,	\$16,000,000

It is proper to add to this amount the taxes levied by the different departments, which may be stated at four millions more, making an aggregate of twenty-one millions, to which an addition should be made of five or ten millions more, which is paid, but embezzled, and therefore does not find its way into the public treasury.

In 1803, according to Mr. Poinsett, the government received for the sale of playing cards, \$120,000; from cockpits, \$45,000; for the sale of Papal indulgences, \$270,000!

In 1829, the revenues amounted to \$11,215,848. The income from the post office, was \$178,738. In 1840, the lotteries produced \$215,437; the cost of managing them as \$158,485, leaving a balance of \$56,952.

Expenses of the Government.

In 1833, according to the report of the secretary of the treasury, the expenses amounted to \$22,392,508. Of this sum, \$16,466,121 was devoted to the army. In 1840, the whole expenses were \$13,155,922; of the army, \$8,000,000.

The restrictions placed upon commerce, both internal and external, have given rise to an immense amount of smuggling, which the republic has no power to prevent; as the reader will at once perceive, when he learns the fact, that Mexico possesses a frontier of five thousand miles on the Pacific, three thousand miles on the United States and Texas, and above two thousand five hundred miles on the Gulf of Mexico; making in all ten thousand five hundred miles of frontier to guard against illicit trade, without scarcely an individual on the whole space to give notice of any depredation that may happen.

Public Debt.

The public debt of Mexico is at the present time quite formidable. In 1841, Mr. Mayer says it was \$84,150,000. Mr. Thompson gives it, in 1844, as a little less than \$100,000,000; and as they are now engaged in the third war since that period, it is safe to say that the public debt is now more than \$100,000,000. In 1842, the internal debt amounted to \$18,550,000; for the payment of which the customs were mortgaged, and was to be paid in the following subdivisions:

17 per cent. of the customs devoted to a debt of	\$2,040,000
15 do. do. do.	410,000
12 do. do. do.	2,100,000
10 do. do. do.	3,100,000
8 do. do. do.	1,200,000
10 do. do. Tobacco fund debt	9,700,000
162-3 do. Interest on English debt	
10 do. Garrison fund	

98 2-3 \$18,550,000

1 1-3 balance, clear of lien, for the government!

The foreign debt is still larger; and including the above, the entire national responsibility, as it existed at the end of 1842, was as follows:

Internal debt	-	-	-	-	\$18,550,000
Debt to English creditors	-	-	-	-	60,000,000
United claims and interest, say	-	-	-	-	2,400,000
Copper to be redeemed	-	-	-	-	2,000,000
Claims for Hilazo	-	-	-	-	700,000
Bustamente loan	-	-	-	-	500,000
					<hr/>
					\$84,150,000

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHURCH—ITS WEALTH AND INFLUENCE.

THE Roman Catholic is the religion of Mexico, and is established by the constitution, to the exclusion of all others. The ecclesiastical establishment consists of one archbishop, (that of Mexico,) and nine bishoprics; namely those of La Puebla, Guadalajara, Valladolid, Durango, Monterey, Oajaca, Yucatan, Chiapa, and Sonora. All of these, except Sonora, have cathedral churches and chapters, which, with the collegiate chapter of Guadalupe, (in the environs of the capital,) contain 185 prebendaries and canonries, formerly in the gift of the king. The number of parishes is about 1200. In 1802, the number of ecclesiastics in the country, both secular and regular, was estimated at 10,000, or at 13,000, including the lay-brothers of convents, and other subordinates of the church. The secular clergy was composed of about 5000 priests; the regulars, wearing the habits of different orders, of nearly an equal number, of whom 2500 resided in the convents of the capital alone. It appears from reports presented to the Mexican congress in 1826 and 1827, by the minister for ecclesiastical affairs, that the number of the secular clergy in 1826, was estimated at 3473, and in 1827, at 3677. The regular clergy was divided into fourteen provinces, possessing 150 convents, which contained in all, 1918 friars.

The following table shows the situation and number of convents, and other particulars, derived from the reports of the Mexican minister:

Situation of Convents.	Number of Convents.	Individuals in each.	Have taken the habit in last 5 years.	Professed in same time.	Now in novitiate.	Curates.	Missions.
Dominicans—							
Mexico	10	123	15	8	6	2	18
Puebla	6	42	4	4	—	2	—
Oaxaca	5	50	13	11	2	9	—
Ciudad Real	4	44	7	7	—	9	—
Franciscans—							
Mexico	34	532	116	64	20	2	33
Queretaro	15	162	86	33	9	3	8
Potosi	11	125	20	12	8	4	19
Guadalajara	7	128	28	17	1	2	23
Merida	1	61	—	—	—	3	—

Augustins—							
Mexico	11	143	49	18	12	2	—
Salamanca	11	92	34	28	4	2	—
Carmelites—							
Mexico	16	224	50	19	11	—	—
Mercedarians—							
Mexico	19	192	40	26	14	—	—
		<u>150</u>	<u>1918</u>	<u>462</u>	<u>247</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>40</u>
						<u>101</u>	

There were at the same period six colleges in Mexico for the propagation of the faith, distributed as follows :

	Number of Religious.	Number of Missions.	Where.
Mexico	66	21	Upper California.
Queretaro	56	9	Sonora.
Pachuca	42	9	Cohahuila and }
Orizava	35	0	Tamaulipas. }
Zacatecas	83	22	Las Tarahum- }
Zapopan	25	0	aras and Texas. }
	<u>307</u>	<u>61</u>	

The salaries of the bishops, in 1802, were supposed to be as follows :

The Archbishop of Mexico	-	-	-	\$130,000
The Bishop of Puebla	-	-	-	110,000
Do. Valladolid	-	-	-	100,000
Do. Guadalajara	-	-	-	90,000
Do. Durango	-	-	-	35,000
Do. Monterey	-	-	-	30,000
Do. Yucatan	-	-	-	20,000
Do. Oaxaca	-	-	-	18,000
Do. Sonora	-	-	-	6,000
			<u>Total,</u>	<u>\$439,000</u>

The value of the church property is estimated at ninety millions of dollars, according to the annexed valuation :—

Real property in town and country	-	-	\$18,000,000
Churches, houses, convents, curates, dwellings, furniture, <i>jewels</i> , precious vessels, &c.	-	-	52,000,000
Floating capital—together with other funds—and the capital required to produce the sum received by them annually in alms	-	-	20,000,000
<u>Total</u>	-	-	<u>\$90,000,000</u>

This estimate, large as it is, is undoubtedly too small ; no one pretends to know the value of the coin, jewels, and ornaments, belonging to the various churches ; which have been accumulating ever since the establishment of the Catholic religion ; and their real estate is constantly increasing. They own very many of the finest houses in Mexico and other cities (the rents of which

must be enormous), besides valuable real estates all over the Republic. Almost every person leaves a bequest in his will for masses for his soul, which constitute an incumbrance upon the estate, and thus nearly all the estates of the small proprietors are mortgaged to the church. The property held by the church in mortmain is estimated at fifty millions.

Mexico is the only country where the church property remains in its untouched entirety. Some small amount has been recently realized from the sale of the estates of the banished Jesuits; but, with that exception, no President, however hard pressed (and there is no day in the year that they are not hard pressed), has ever dared to encroach upon that which is regarded consecrated property, with the exception of Gomez Farrias, who, in 1834, proposed to the legislative chambers to confiscate all the church property, and the measure would, no doubt, have been adopted, but for a revolution which overthrew the administration.

Mr. Thompson says that he has heard intelligent men in Mexico express the opinion that one-fourth of the property of the country was in the hands of the priesthood, and instead of diminishing, it is constantly increasing.

That the reader may have some idea of the magnificence and richness of the Mexican churches, we will transfer to our pages, the Hon. Waddy Thompson's description of the Cathedral at Mexico:—

“The Cathedral, which occupies the site of the great idol temple of Montezuma, is five hundred feet long by four hundred and twenty wide. Like all the other churches in Mexico, it is built in the Gothic style. The walls, of several feet thickness, are made of unhewn stone and lime. Upon entering it, one is apt to recall the wild fictions of the Arabian Nights; it seems as if the wealth of empires was collected there. The clergy in Mexico do not, for obvious reasons, desire that their wealth should be made known to its full extent; they are, therefore, not disposed to give very full information upon the subject, or to exhibit the gold and silver vessels, vases, precious stones, and other forms of wealth; quite enough is exhibited to strike the beholder with wonder. The first object that presents itself on entering the cathedral is the altar, near the centre of the building; it is made of highly-wrought and highly-polished silver, and covered with a profusion of ornaments of pure gold. On each side of this altar runs a balustrade, enclosing a space about eight feet wide and eighty or a hundred feet long. The balusters are about four feet high, and four inches thick in the largest part; the hand-rail from six to eight inches wide. Upon the top of this hand-rail, at the distance of six or eight feet apart, are human images, beautifully wrought, and about two feet high. All of these, the balustrade, hand-rail, and images, are made of a compound of gold, silver, and copper—more valuable than silver. I was told that an offer had been made to take this balustrade, and replace it with another of exactly the same size and workmanship, of pure silver, and to give half a million of dollars besides. There is much more of the same balustrade in other parts of the church; I should think, in all of it, not less than three hundred feet.

“As you walk through the building, on either side there are different apartments, all filled, from the floor to the ceiling, with paintings, statues, vases, huge candlesticks, waiters, and a thousand other articles, made of gold or silver. This, too, is only the every day display of articles of least value; the more costly are stowed away in chests and closets. What must it be when all these are brought out, with the immense quantities of precious stones which the church is known to possess? And this is only one of the churches of the city of Mexico, where there are between sixty and eighty others, and some of them possessing little less wealth than the cathedral; and it must also be remembered, that all the other large cities, such as Puebla, Guadalajara, Guanajuato, Zacatecas, Durango, San Louis Potosi, have each a proportionate number of equally gorgeous establishments. It would be the wildest and most random conjecture to attempt an

estimate of the amount of the precious metals thus withdrawn from the useful purposes of the currency of the world, and wasted in these barbaric ornaments, as incompatible with good taste as they are with the humility which was the most striking feature in the character of the Founder of our religion, whose chosen instruments were the lowly and humble, and who himself regarded as the highest evidence of his divine mission, the fact that "to the poor the gospel was preached." I do not doubt but there is enough of the precious metals in the different churches of Mexico to relieve sensibly the pressure upon the currency of the world, which has resulted from the diminished production of the mines, and the increased quantity which has been appropriated to purposes of luxury, and to pay the cost of much more tasteful decorations in architecture and statuary, made of mahogany and marble."

STATE OF EDUCATION.

In a country where the people are oppressed by a military and religious despotism, we are not to look for a very high standard of education. It is estimated that out of seven millions of people who inhabit Mexico, only 687,748 are able to read and write, and of these, 80,120 are Negroes and Indians. Education, which should receive the especial care of Republican governments, is least regarded in Mexico. In 1840, \$180,000 were expended for hospitals, fortresses, and prisons—\$8,000,000 for the army, (without a foreign war) and only \$110,000 were given to all the institutions of learning.

In the city of Mexico, there are four collegiate establishments, one being under the immediate supervision of the Archbishop, and supported by a portion of the ecclesiastical revenues, and the other three are under the care of the Government. There is also a normal school supported by the Government, devoted to the instruction of the soldiers of the army; improvement in this school is rewarded by advancement in rank. The city is also divided into parishes, in each of which there is established a school for boys and another for girls, supported by the Town Council. In the former, the pupils are taught to read, write and calculate, and are also instructed in religious and political catechisms. The same branches are taught in the girls' school, and in addition they learn sewing and other suitable occupations. The instruction, books and stationery are all furnished without charge. There is also a Lancasterian Company, composed of the most wealthy and educated citizens of Mexico, who are extending their schools all over the Republic; they are already in all the principal cities, towns, and villages. In these schools, like those already described in the capital, the pupils are taught without charge. Schools have also been organized in the Prisons and House of Correction for juvenile delinquents, which are taught by the most respectable ladies of Mexico, who devote a portion of their time to this very benevolent object. Besides all these establishments, there are, in the city of Mexico, a large number of private or select schools, which are conducted by foreigners as well as natives, so that in the matter of education, the Mexicans are making great advancement. God grant that they may soon realize that important truth—that man was created for a higher and a nobler purpose than to waste his energies upon the battle-field.





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